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Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1983

TED ENGLE, SUPERINTENDENT
Southern Ohio Correctional
Facility,
Petitioner

vs.

RAYMOND WALKER,
Respondent

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI - HABEAS CORPUS

To the United States Court of Appeals
For the Sixth Circuit

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QUESTION PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

Whether a United States District Court, in habeas corpus proceedings, may substitute its judgment on relevance for that of state courts interpreting Ohio law; and under the guise of due process and through unwarranted inferences, attempt to exercise supervisory powers over the state trial and reviewing courts.

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No.

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1983

STATE OF OHIO,
Petitioner,

vs.

RAYMOND WALKER,
Respondent.

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI - HABEAS CORPUS

To the United States Court of Appeals
For the Sixth Circuit

Petitioner, State of Ohio, respectfully prays that a writ of certiorari issue to review the judgment and opinion of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit entered in this proceeding on March 23, 1983, and decision denying rehearing en banc entered June 24, 1983.

OPINION BELOW

The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which has not been officially recorded, appears in the Appendix hereto.

JURISDICTION

The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit was entered on March 23, 1983. A timely petition for rehearing en banc was denied on June 24, 1983, and this petition for certiorari was filed within 90 days of that date. This Court's jurisdiction was invoked under 28 U.S.C. Section 1254(1).

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION INVOLVED

This case involves the 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution which provides in relevant part:

> . . . the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution or prohibited by it to the states are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Respondent, Raymond Walker, was indicted by the Stark County, Ohio, Grand Jury for the first degree felony murder arising out of the purposeful killing of off-duty Canton Police Detective, Guy Mack, on July 22, 1972, during the perpetration of a robbery. The indictment was returned on March 12, 1976. Walker was, at all critical stages of the proceedings, represented by Attorney Stanley E. Tolliver. His first trial, in which Walker adduced alibi testimony of one Lamar Potts that he was continuously in the company of Potts, drinking at various bars and after-hours establishments in Cleveland on the weekend of the murder, ended in a hung jury.

At Walker's second trial, in which he adduced an alibi defense that he was incarcerated in the Cuyahoga County Jail at the time of the murder, the jury returned a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree under former Ohio Revised Code Section 2901.01. A direct appeal from the judgment of conviction was perfected to the Fifth District Court of Appeals for Ohio, which affirmed the conviction in June, 1977. Leave to appeal was granted by the Ohio Supreme Court, which affirmed the judgment of conviction as set forth in the opinion in *State v. Walker,* 55 Ohio St. 2d 208 (1978). Petition for

writ of certiorari was filed to this Court, which denied the writ. *Walker v. Ohio,* 441 U.S. 924 (1979). In November, 1979, Walker filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S. Code Section 2254 with the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, being Case No. C79-2132. On August 14, 1980, a United States magistrate issued a report and recommendation that the petition be granted. On August 22, 1980, the Attorney General for the State of Ohio submitted for filing objections to the report and recommendation of the magistrate; and on January 28, 1981, the Honorable Judge John Thomas issued a memorandum and order, followed on February 2, 1981, by a supplemental memorandum and order in which he rejected all those portions of the magistrate's recommendations except that portion which determined that Walker had been denied a fair trial in violation of the due process clause of the 14th Amendment, by reason of the introduction of six categories of evidence which the Court found to have been irrelevant. On February 25, 1981, petitioner filed its notice of appeal from Judge Thomas's order. The cause was argued before the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit which, on March 23, 1983, issued its opinion affirming the United States District Court. On April 5, 1983, petitioner filed a petition for rehearing and suggestion for rehearing en banc and by order dated June 24, 1983, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals denied such rehearing.

REASON FOR GRANTING THE WRIT

The Decision of the District Court Below, as Affirmed by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, Reflects a Usurpation of a State's Right to Determine What Constitutes "Relevant Evidence" in a State Criminal Trial Proceeding and a Departure From the Mandate of This Court in *Sumner v. Mata*, 449 U.S. 539, Requiring Deference to State Court Determinations of Factual Issues.

Judge Thomas of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, concluded that respondent's conviction should be reversed and remanded for retrial because of cumulative errors and the admission of allegedly irrelevant evidence. In his supplemental opinion, the District Judge found that Title 28 U.S.C. Section 2254(D)(1) through (D)(7) were inapplicable in the instant case. Thus, he conceded:

(D)(1) That the merits of the factual dispute were resolved in state court hearings;

(D)(2) That the fact finding procedures employed by the state courts were adequate to afford a full and fair hearing;

(D)(3) That the material facts were adequately developed at the state court hearings;

(D)(6) That the applicant received a full, fair and adequate hearing in the state court proceedings; and

(D)(7) That the applicant was not denied due process of law in state court proceedings.

(See Appendix Opinion.)

The District Court Judge purported to apply Ohio law as the standard for determining relevance. Both the Fifth District Court of Appeals for Ohio and the Supreme Court of Ohio, in applying the Ohio definition of relevance, considered and rejected the same claims of error. This Court then denied certiorari to review those claims. Thus, the question becomes whether, in applying Ohio law, the District Court could substitute its judgment for the Ohio courts on the question of what constitutes relevant evidence to rebut the unique alibi defense raised at trial, to-wit: that the petitioner was in jail at the time of the homicide—and the question of relevance generally, as it is applied to other evidence adduced in the proceedings.

This Court has defined the scope of due process review of state convictions. It has pointed out that the scope is more limited than the exercise of supervisory powers on review of federal convictions. The scope of review for state court proceedings is "the narrow one of due process" and "not every trial error or infirmity which might call for application of supervisory powers" and correspondingly, constitutes a "failure to observe that fundamental fairness essential to the very concept of justice." *Donnelly v. DeChristoforo*, 416 U.S. 637 at 642. In *Donnelly, supra*, this Court was careful to note that this was not a case in which a state was alleged to have denied defendant the benefit of specific provisions of the Bill of Rights; but rather, the intangible concept of a trial with unfairness so as to make the resulting conviction a denial of due process. *Donnelly, supra*, parallels the instant case and led this Court to examine the conflicting inference drawn by the lower courts from the errors complained of, finding no clear indication that the jury engaged in the hypothetical analysis used to reverse the conviction in federal habeas corpus. In the instant

case, the District Court constantly engaged in hypothetical analysis of the impact of the evidence upon the jury without support in the record, i.e., see Judge Thomas's conclusion that certain evidence "appealed to anti-Cuyahoga County provincialism at the expense of the defendant," and the conclusion that the questioning of witnesses concerning John Appling "obviously sought to suggest to the jury that Appling's testimony would have been helpful to the prosecution had he testified and not asserted his 5th Amendment privilege." (Appendix, page A41).

The Sixth Circuit likewise has condemned the use of unwarranted inference by the District Judges as a basis for reversing state criminal convictions. In *Bell v. Arn*, 536 F.2d 123 (6th Cir. 1976), the Court noted that:

> The District Judge concludes that the cumulative effect of the alleged errors in the petitioner's case was highly prejudicial and denied her the constitutional right to a fair trial. We disagree. Barring the unwarranted inferences of the District Judge, we find nothing in the record to support the conclusion that the petitioner did not have a fair trial. *Bell, supra*, page 126.

Numerous cases have dealt with the proposition that allegations that state trial courts have admitted irrelevant testimony do not raise due process issues of such constitutional magnitude as to entitle a petitioner to federal habeas corpus relief. *Nelson v. Moriarity*, 484 F.2d 1034 (C.A. Mass. 1973); *Jarrell v. Stahl*, (D.C.N.C. 1978) 446 F. Supp. 395, *Aff'd* 588 F.2d 1349; *Snyder v. Illinois*, 442 F. Supp. 75. Federal courts have also recognized that once a trial judge makes a decision as to relevance, an appellate court should not quickly substitute its judgment for that of the trial judge. *United States v. Johnston*, 585 F.2d 119 (5th Cir.

1978). The instant case involved the pure and simple substitution of the District Court's judgment for that of the trial court and other state courts on the issue of relevance. In *Ruse v. Cardwell*, 410 F.2d 1126 (6th Cir. 1969), the Sixth Circuit cited with approval, the decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in *Chavez v. Dickenson*, 2 A.D. F.2d 727, *cert. den.* 364 U.S. 934. Quoting at page 1126 of *Ruse, supra*:

> Where there is no question concerning a federally significant external event, such as the voluntariness of a confession, or the knowing use of perjured testimony, a trial court's ruling on the admissibility of evidence may not be questioned in a federal habeas corpus proceeding.

The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals recognized the concept of deference to state courts on the issue of the applicability of state law on the admission of evidence, and held that errors in the interpretation of state authority are for the state Supreme Court to correct, going on to state that this Court will not take the extraordinarily intrusive step of setting aside a state criminal conviction in the guise of due process review simply because we disagree with the state court's interpretation of state law. *U.S. ex rel. Burnett v. Illinois*, 619 F.2d 668 at 671 (7th Cir. 1980).

It is also clear that the District Court failed to apply the rule established by this Court in *Sumner v. Mata*, 449 U.S. 539, and its subsequent opinion in *Sumner v. Mata*, 71 L. Ed. 2d 480, in that it failed to accord a presumption of correctness to state court findings of fact or in lieu thereof, to give a written explanation of the reasoning that led it to conclude that one or more of the first seven factors listed in Section 2254(D) were present, or the reasoning which led it to conclude that the state finding

was not thoroughly supported by the record. In the instant case, the Sixth Circuit held on page 13 of its opinion that: ". . . the state appellate court holding that there is no evidence that shows that the defendant preserved the issue (the John Appling affair mentioned in the opinion) for appeal by objecting at trial, has no foundation in the record" is a finding of fact with regard to which the panel failed to apply Section 2254(D). (*See also Marshall v. Lonberger,* ....., 32 Crl. 3027).

Two general propositions sum up the respondent's position in this particular case:

> Preventing and dealing with crime is much more the business of the states than it is of the federal government. *Irvin v. California,* 347 U.S. 128 at 134.
>
> Federal courts should not lightly construe the constitution so as to intrude upon the administration of justice by individual states. Among other things, it is normally within the power of the state to regulate procedures under which its laws are carried out. *Patterson v. New York,* 432 U.S. 197.

These principles, together with the 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution, were disregarded by the lower courts by their substitution of their own standard of relevance for that of the state courts, thereby exercising supervisory powers over such courts without authority.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons cited above, it is respectfully submitted that a writ of certiorari should issue to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit to review the judgment of that Court and that of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

OPINION OF THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

(Filed March 23, 1983)

Nos. 81-3117, 81-3260

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

RAYMOND WALKER,
Petitioner-Appellee, Cross-Appellant,

v.

TED ENGLE,
Respondent-Appellant, Cross-Appellee.

ON APPEAL from the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio.

Before: KEITH and JONES, *Circuit Judges* and BROWN, *Senior Circuit Judge.**

JONES, *Circuit Judge*, delivered the opinion of the Court, in which KEITH, *Circuit Judge*, joined, BROWN, *Senior Circuit Judge* (p. 20) filed a separate concurring opinion.

JONES, *Circuit Judge*. The State of Ohio appeals the district Court's grant of a writ of habeas corpus to Raymond Walker. [2] Walker cross-appeals from the failure

*The Honorable Bailey Brown retired from regular active service under the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 371(b) on June 16, 1982 and became a Senior Circuit Judge.

of the district court to hold that a retrial on the charge of first-degree murder was precluded by an insufficiency of the evidence. We affirm the order of the district court granting the writ of habeas corpus and the remand for a new trial.

On July 22, 1972, a robbery occurred at an A&P supermarket in Canton, Ohio. Guy Mack, an off-duty detective with the Canton City Police Department, was shot and killed during the robbery.

The robbery was committed by four men, three of whom entered the store while the other remained outside. In 1973, Warren Davidson and Fred Ogletree were convicted as aiders and abettors in the robbery and homicide and sentenced to life imprisonment. Neither man, however, was believed to be the triggerman.

In late 1975, while incarcerated, Davidson and Ogletree contacted Stark County authorities and implicated Walker as the triggerman in the killing. In return for their testimony against Walker, Stark County officials recommended leniency to the Governor of Ohio.

Walker was indicted on March 12, 1976. The first trial ended with a hung jury.[1] At his second trial, Walker contended by way of alibi that he was confined in the Cuyahoga County Jail on July 22, 1972, the day of the robbery and killing. The official records of the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, which were stipulated to by counsel, reflected that Walker was indeed confined in the Cuyahoga County Jail from April 14, 1972 to August 1, 1972. In response the state introduced an abundance of evidence attempting to show that the officers charged

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1. The magistrate noted that, according to petitioner's brief, when the jury was discharged the panel stood 10 for 2 for acquittal. App. 28.

with running the Cuyahoga County Jail were so corrupt and/or inefficient that Walker could have gotten out of jail before July 22 and then returned to jail before August 1.

After his second trial, Walker was convicted of first-degree [3] murder. His conviction was affirmed by the Ohio Fifth District Court of Appeals in June 1977. Walker appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court which, in a divided vote, affirmed his conviction. *State v. Walker,* 55 Ohio St.2d 208 (1978). In April 1979, the United States Supreme Court denied Walker's petition for a writ of certiorari. *Walker v. Ohio,* 441 U.S. 924 (1979).

In November 1979, Walker filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The petition listed three grounds for relief: (1) that the Ohio appellate courts erred in failing to apply the standard of review enunciated by *Jackson v. Virginia,* 443 U.S. 307 (1979); (2) that under the *Jackson* standard, no rational trier of fact could have found Walker guilty of the Mack killing beyond a reasonable doubt; and (3) that numerous trial errors resulting in the admission of irrelevant and inflammatory evidence cumulatively operated to deny Walker a fair trial.

The magistrate filed a 108-page recommended report and decision in which he carefully reviewed the testimony of the forty trial witnesses and examined the conduct of the prosecutor in questioning witnesses and delivering his closing argument.[2] The magistrate ultimately agreed with Walker that the state's evidence regarding corruption and inefficiency at the Cuyahoga County Jail went so far beyond meeting the legitimate issues that the focus of the trial was no longer on Walker's guilt or innocence, but rather on the allegedly unlawful conduct of the officials

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2. App. 27-134.

running the jail. He concluded that the cumulative effect of the evidentiary errors was to deny Walker fundamental fairness. Having determined that a writ of habeas corpus should issue, the magistrate then analyzed the sufficiency of the evidence and concluded that a retrial of Walker was precluded by *Jackson* because of evidentiary insufficiency.

The district court then issued an opinion which, for reasons [4] "independently reach[ed]," concluded that Walker was denied a fair trial in violation of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. However, the district court disagreed with the magistrate's conclusion that *Jackson* precluded a retrial, holding that apart "from the prejudicial evidence, the prosecution produced sufficient other evidence which, viewed in the light most favorable to the prosecution, would permit a reasonable trier of fact to find Walker guilty beyond a reasonable doubt."[3]

These appeals followed.

I

The major questions we are required to decide are (1) whether the district court was correct in concluding that the admission of certain evidence by the state operated to deny Walker due process of law; and (2) whether the evidence against Walker was so insufficient as to preclude a retrial.

We begin our discussion with the proposition that errors in application of state law, especially with regard to the admissibility of evidence, are usually not cognizable in federal habeas corpus. *Bell v. Arn*, 536 F.2d 123 (6th Cir. 1976); *Reese v. Cardwell*, 410 F.2d 1125 (6th Cir. 1969).

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3. App. 138.

Yet, errors of state law, including evidentiary rulings, which result in a denial of fundamental fairness will support relief in habeas corpus. *Handley v. Pitts*, 491 F.Supp. 599, *aff'd.*, 623 F.2d 23 (6th Cir. 1980); *Maglaya v. Buckhoe*, 515 F.2d 265 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 423 U.S. 931 (1975); *Gemel v. Buckhoe*, 358 F.2d 338 (6th Cir. 1966).

The magistrate, in concluding that the cumulative effect of the evidentiary errors denied Walker due process, relied on the entire record. A condensation of his lengthy and excellent analysis would not now be fruitful, since the district court based its findings on six specific aspects of the trial. It should [5] be noted that even these six alleged errors must be considered for their cumulative effect. Errors that might not be so prejudicial as to amount to a deprivation of due process when considered alone, may cumulatively produce a trial setting that is fundamentally unfair. *United States v. Jones*, 482 F.2d 747 (D.C. Cir. 1973); *Newman v. United States*, 311 F.2d 74 (5th Cir. 1962); *United States v. Maroney*, 373 F.2d 908 (3rd Cir. 1967). It will suffice for our consideration to assess the six alleged trial errors and their cumulative effect.

II

A. Evidence of criminal conviction of Major Payne.[4]

Payne had been Warden of the Cuyahoga County Jail before and after, but not during, Walker's recorded period of confinement. The prosecution, over defense counsel's strenuous and continuing objections, was allowed to question two defense witnesses about Payne's criminal convic-

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4. Throughout the state court trial and subsequent proceedings, references are made to a "Major Paine." This Court takes judicial notice of the fact that the correct title and name are Major Edward Payne.

tion (which came well after Walker's recorded period of detention) for theft of property from the jail. When a defense witness stated that "I think it was something about two guns that were missing," the prosecutor asked, "What was it, evidence?" Defense counsel once again objected on grounds of relevancy, but the trial court ruled, "No, it's very relevant in this case. Overruled." The prosecutor then continued his attack on the integrity of the Sheriff's Office personnel.

The district court held that the testimony regarding Major Payne's conviction:[5]

> bore no relevance to the state's case or any issue concerning the accuracy of jail records or record keeping procedures or, more generally, to the reliability of jail **[6]** security. Contrary to the trial judge's on-the-record conclusion that Paine's [sic] testimony was "very relevant in this case," it had no tendency to make the truth or falsity of Walker's alibi more or less probable than it would be without the evidence .... Its sole purpose and clear effect was to prejudice the jury's consideration of Walker's alibi.

The state replies that:[6]

> It is submitted that the relevance of the testimony concerning Major Payne may be said to arise from the quality of the supervisory personnel selected to keep and maintain the Cuyahoga County Jail records upon which the alibi was dependent. To this extent it should make no difference whether the record indicates an act of supervisory capacity at the exact time of Walker's incarceration .... The question with regard to Major Payne reflect [sic] on the security of evi-

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5. App. 142-43.
6. State's Brief at 11-12.

> dence held at the jail, and jail security was a major issue in the trial of a case in which it appears that a supposed inmate was able to commit a crime in a town sixty miles away.

We agree with the district court that (1) the record is clear that Mayor Payne was not employed at the jail during Walker's incarceration, and (2) testimony regarding "the security of *evidence* held at the jail" has no apparent connection to the issue whether a *prisoner* could leave the jail *and return* undetected.

B. Testimony of State Auditor.

Walker introduced jail commissary records to show that he made numerous transactions during his confinement, including one on the day of the crime. The prosecutor endeavored to undermine this circumstantial evidence by testimony of jail [7] deputies that inmates other than Walker could have made purchases using his commissary account.

However, the state added to this impeachment by calling Frank Lancianese, an examiner for the Office of the State Auditor. He testified, over repeated objections, that (1) an audit of the commissary account funds between 1969 and 1975 revealed a $66,000 shortage; (2) the State Auditor's Office encountered "obstacles" in gaining access to the commissary records; and (3) an audit of jail vending machine profits revealed $9,000 unaccounted for by the Sheriff's Department. The prosecutor used this testimony in his closing argument as follows:

> We have brought the records to you concerning the audit of the sheriff's department for one reason alone. To show you that all the thieves and the bad people weren't on the inside of the jail; that if you lie and

> steal what says you won't let a prisoner out for a weekend or a few days.

The district court properly concluded that the admission of the auditor's testimony bore no relationship to the issues raised by Walker's alibi defense, was highly prejudicial, and was calculated to sway the jury on the basis of guilt by association.

The state argues that the auditor's testimony regarding theft from the commissary fund "was relevant to rebut the accuracy of commissary records relied on by Walker in support of his alibi defense."[7] This contention must be rejected, since the alleged thefts did not affect the *record of commissary transactions* relied on by Walker, but showed merely that *commissary* funds may have at some time been misappropriated by Sheriff's Department personnel. As for testimony regarding the vending machines, the state is compelled to concede that it "was not relevant by any definition."[8]

[8] C. References to Tom Booth.

Tom Booth, a member of the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, attended and viewed the trial but was not a witness. The prosecution was permitted, without any basis in the record, to insinuate that several defense witnesses from the Sheriff's Department were being monitored and coached by Tom Booth in furtherance of a Sheriff's Department coverup of improprieties. The state replies that the cross-examination of the defense witnesses was a proper inquiry to determine their credibility and whether they had in fact been coached. The state adds that since control of cross-examination is committed to the discretion of the state trial court, the trial court's

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7. **State's Brief at 12.**
8. **State's Brief at 13.**

rulings are not cognizable on habeas corpus. In support of the latter contention, the state cites *U.S. ex rel. Hickey v. Jeffes*, 571 F.2d 762 (3rd Cir. 1978). *Hickey*, however, merely held that a state trial court's admission of certain evidence did not, under the facts of that case, constitute an error of constitutional dimensions. 571 F.2d at 766. *Hickey* does not hold that errors in discretionary rulings can never rise to constitutional dimensions; on the contrary, it is clear that they can. *Gemel v. Buckhoe*, 358 F.2d 338, 340 (6th Cir. 1966).

D. Testimony of Canton Police Sergeant Newkirk.

Walker was first located in Chicago, Illinois. Newkirk was allowed to speculate, over objection, that Cuyahoga County authorities impeded Walker's extradition from Illinois to Stark County. The state makes a claim of relevancy. We agree with the district court's finding that this testimony was highly irrelevant and prejudicial conjecture.

E. The John Appling Affair.

As part of its case in chief, the state called John Appling to the stand. Appling, a prisoner in 1972, had served as a "range boss" for the cell block to which Walker was assigned. He [9] refused to be sworn, at which point the trial court began to question Appling concerning his reasons for not wanting to be sworn or to testify. After excusing the jury, the judge called counsel for both sides to the bench. At that conference, the following interchange took place:

> The Court: Counsel approach the bench please?
>
> (Counsel Approach the Bench)
>
> Mr. Ake: Your honor, the testimony we have that we believe he can relate has absolutely nothing

to do with any Fifth Amendment right of his. We are willing to put on for your benefit Detective Newkirk who can give you that testimony to make a determination. He basically—we are—we have testimony to the affect [sic] that he was in the jail in 1972 with Raymond Walker; that Raymond Walker—that he himself was allowed to walk free from the county jail; that he knows of certain activities in the county jail and that he in fact saw Raymond Walker on the outside of the county jail building isn't that correct?

Mr. Jaeck: That's correct. During the time that he was supposed to be confined.

Mr. Tolliver: That has to be in conflict because I had the privilege of talking to this gentleman last night myself and that's not what he told me.

The Court: He refuses to testify.

Mr. Tolliver: I'll take the stand myself and tell what he told me.

The Court: You got a subpoena on for him too.

Mr. Tolliver. I have.

The Court: And I saw that it was served too.

Mr. Tolliver: What I'm saying is that this business about having people come in to say what he said I don't see how that can be allowed.

[10] Mr. Ake: Your Honor, basically the Fifth Amendment does not protect any right here, and we're asking the Court after being permitted to show that he is a hostile witness to then impeach our own witness.

After further questioning by the judge, both Appling and the judge retired to chambers. Upon their return,

the judge recalled the jury and allowed Appling, without being sworn, to take the stand, identify himself and refuse to testify.

The state then questioned seven other witnesses concerning Appling. The district court, in the proceeding below, concluded that the state's questions "sought to suggest to the jury that Appling's testimony would have been helpful to the prosecution had he testified." Citing *U.S. v. Vandetti*, 623 F.2d 1144 (6th Cir. 1980), which discusses the constitutional problems that arise when the state is permitted to put a witness on the stand who will assert the Fifth Amendment, the district court stated:

> The entire line of questioning about Appling leads this court to conclude that Walker's right to a fair trial was grossly prejudiced by the suggestion that evidence was not being presented to the jury which would have established Walker's guilt.

The state now contends that since defense counsel did not object to the questions at trial, any claim of error has been waived. In fact, the state court of appeals appears to have applied a procedural bar to raising the issue on appeal.[9] We **[11]** cannot agree that this error is

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9. The court of appeals stated:

The fifth assignment of error complains that the court erred in ordering a witness, John Appling, to testify and in permitting inquiries concerning him throughout the trial.

An examination of the record shows that John Appling was called as a state's witness and refused to take an oath (R. 51). Whereupon the court excused the jury and conducted a lengthy examination of the witness (R. 52-62). Immediately, the jury was returned to the box whereupon the witness responded to questions giving his name and address and indicating that he refused to testify, whereupon he was excused and the jury recessed for a regular recess. We find no objection to any of these proceedings and none has been pointed out to us in oral argument to the briefs. Therefore the error, if any there was, is not cognizable upon appeal. See *State v. Gordon*, 28 Ohio St.2d 48.

not cognizable in this habeas proceeding. The record clearly indicates that defense counsel objected to the process whereby Appling would take the stand so that the prosecution could put other witnesses on to suggest that Appling had relevant testimony to bolster its case.

It is true that, absent a showing of cause and prejudice, *Wainwright v. Sykes*, 433 U.S. 72 (1977) precludes a federal court, as a matter of comity, from hearing an issue to which the state appellate courts applied a procedural bar. Yet, it must also be made clear that this rule is a matter of comity between the federal and state courts and should not be applied to preclude federal courts from hearing federal constitutional claims when to do so does no disrespect to the state courts and their procedural rules. *Jackson v. Cupp*, 693 F.2d 867 (9th Cir. 1982). Thus, in *Ulster County Court v. Allen*, 442 U.S. 140 (1979), the Supreme Court held that the *Sykes* rule does not apply when it is *not* clear that the state appellate court had applied a procedural bar. Furthermore, it is now well accepted that when the state appellate court ignores the state procedural default, the federal courts may also reach the merits on a habeas review. To do so does not denigrate the state procedural system. *Ulster County Court v. Allen*, 442 U.S. 140 (1979); *Hockenberry v. Sowders*, 620 F.2d 111, *reh. denied*, 633 F.2d 443 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 450 U.S. 933, *reh. denied*, 451 U.S. 933 (1980); *Cook v. Bordenkircher*, 602 F.2d 117 (6th Cir. 1979); *Bell v. Watkins*, 692 F.2d 999 (5th Cir. 1982), *Burns v. Estelle*, 592 F.2d 1297 (5th Cir. 1979), *aff'd. en banc*, 626 F.2d 396 (1980); *Moran v. Estelle*, 607 F.2d 1140 (5th Cir. 1979); *Henson v. Wyrick*, 634 F.2d 1080 (8th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 450 U.S. 958 (1980); *Quigg v. Crist*, 616 **[12]** F.2d 1107 (9th Cir. 1980); *Brinlee v. Crisp*, 608 F.2d 839 (10th Cir. 1978); *cert. denied*, 444 U.S. 1047. *See also Martinez v. Harris*, 675 F.2d 51 (2d Cir. 1982).

We believe that when a state appellate court applies a procedural bar that has no foundation in the record or state law, the federal courts need not honor that bar.[10] We do not by this holding sanction blanket federal court review of state procedural rulings, rather the rule is to ensure that the state courts do not block federal vindication of federal constitutional rights by procedural rulings that have no basis in state law or the facts of the particular case.

In Ohio, the appellate courts will not entertain an objection on appeal that was not raised before the trial court "at a time when such error could have been avoided or corrected by the trial court." *State v. Gordon*, 28 Ohio St.2d 45, 50 (1971). The underlying rationale of this rule is the same as that in the requirement of F.R.C.P. 51; that "the court should be given an opportunity to correct a mistake or defect . . . when it can be accomplished during the same trial." *Presley v. Norwood*, 36 Ohio St.2d 29, 33 (1973). In *Presley*, the Supreme Court of Ohio held that the rationale used by the federal courts under F.R.C.P. 51

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10. We note the issue as to whether this Court can, consistent with *Wainwright v. Sykes*, reach the merits of an issue on habeas with no showing of cause and prejudice even when there is a technical state procedural bar. There appears to be confusion in this Circuit as to whether constitutional infirmities in state trials that are reviewable under state law fall outside the *Sykes* requirement. There is ample authority that when there is a plain error exception in state law, we can reach the merits absent any *Sykes* analysis, if the alleged infirmities amount to plain error. *Brewer v. Overberg*, 624 F.2d 51 (6th Cir.) *cert. denied*, 449 U.S. 1085 (1980); *Berrier v. Egeler*, 583 F.2d 515 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 439 U.S. 955 (1978); *Rachel v. Bordenkircher*, 590 F.2d 200 (6th Cir. 1978); *Cook v. Bordenkircher*, 602 F.2d 117 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 444 U.S. 936 (1979); *Krzeminski v. Perini*, 614 F.2d 121 (6th Cir. 1980). Yet, the holding in *Hockenberry v. Sowders*, 620 F.2d 111 (6th Cir. 1979) appears to be in tension with that authority. *See Hockenberry v. Sowders*, 633 F.2d 443 (6th Cir. 1979) (order denying rehearing) [especially the dissenting opinions of Judges Keith and Jones at 633 F.2d 445, 448]. Since we here find no adequate state procedural bar, we need not reach this issue.

was equally controlling for the state rule. It explicitly [13] adopted the rule that "once a party makes his position sufficiently clear to the trial court, the rationale for formally objecting to a charge given in disregard of that position is no longer present." *Id.* at 33, *citing, inter alia, Evansville Container Corp. v. McDonald,* 132 F.2d 80 (6th Cir. 1942); *Kentucky Trust Co. v. Glenn,* 217 F.2d 4262 (6th Cir. 1954); *Pleitz v. Garrison,* 413 F.2d 895 (8th Cir. 1969).

The state appellate court's holding that there is no evidence which shows that the defendant preserved the issue for appeal by objecting at trial has no foundation in the record. We need not engage in a microscopic-type search of the trial record to conclude that the trial judge was aware that there was a serious question raised as to whether Appling should testify. Moreover, it is clear that the trial judge knew that the defense objected to the proposed minuet which would have Appling take the stand, refuse to testify only to then allow the prosecution to admit other witnesses' views of what Appling might have said. The awareness is apparent given that the trial judge raised the first issue, as to whether or not Appling should take the stand at all, himself. He dismissed the jury and proceeded to question the witness. In light of this, there was obviously no additional need to make a formal objection. Further, the defense clearly did object to the entire scheme once it became clear that Appling would not testify. We do not find and therefore cannot say that there is any support for the view that the trial court did not have an opportunity to consider the issue and correct itself. To the contrary, from the record, the conclusion is inescapable that the court clearly decided the issue against the defendant.

We thus find that we need not honor the state appellate court's claim to procedural default. Its holding

is against the clear record and well-recognized state rule. While state application of its own rules of procedure would not be *reviewable* on habeas, the notions of comity that underlie the *Wainwright v. Sykes* rule do not require that we defer to applications of state procedural bars that have no foundation. There [14] is no foundation here. To hold otherwise without such a foundation would allow state courts, through erroneous rulings, to insulate federal constitutional questions from federal review.[11]

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11. We are well aware of the danger of a holding which would permit state prisoners to attack, in federal habeas actions, state appellate court applications of state procedural rules as a bar to the review of issues not raised at trial. To allow such a blanket rule would undo the cause and prejudice test enunciated in *Wainwright* and reaffirmed just last term in *Isaac v. Engle*, 50 U.S.L.W. 4359 (1982). *Cf. Hockenberry v. Sowders*, 633 F.2d 443 (6th Cir. 1980). Yet, the Supreme Court in *Ulster County, supra*, also made clear that the comity concerns underlying the *Wainwright* rule do not weaken the federal court's duty to vindicate federal constitutional rights. When, as here, the state essentially adopts the federal rule for procedural bars and it is clear from the record that the state appellate application of the procedural bar has no foundation, we believe the comity balance weighs most heavily on the side of not deferring to the obviously erroneous state porcedural bar.

The Fifth Circuit has recently stated that:

> the notion of comity which underlies the exhaustion doctrine must be understood not as a capitulation of federal power to state interests; rather, comity involves a delicate balance and compromise of both state and federal concerns. For as much as the unchanneled exercise of habeas corpus by the federal courts would disrupt the integrity of the state criminal process, so too would an unthinking subservience to state sovereignty render the time-honored Writ of Liberty sterile and nugatory. Comity requires sensitive accommodation, and not simply slavish adherence, to the interests of the states.

Carter v. Estelle, 677 F.2d 427, 442-43 (5th Cir. 1982). We are of the belief that it would be slavish adherence to state interests to fail to vindicate a state prisoner's constitutional rights under the guise of honoring a state procedural ruling that is without foundation.

Our position gains added support from the Fifth Circuit's view in *Rummel v. Estelle*, 587 F.2d 651 (5th Cir. 1978). There,

(Continued on following page)

Footnote continued—

the defendant had failed to raise an objection at trial to the application of the Texas habitual criminal statute. The Fifth Circuit rejected the argument that the petitioner was now barred from raising the issue on habeas with:

> Since it is apparent that the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals has repeatedly rejected Rummel-like challenges to the Texas habitual criminal statute, we are at a loss to see how any state interest would be served by demanding that Rummel make a futile gesture at his trial.

Id. at 653.

At least one other court has sought the need not to defer to an application of a state procedural bar when it appeared from the record to be without foundation. In *Thergood v. Tedford*, 473 F.Supp. 339 (D.C. Conn. 1978), the Court noted that even though the state had evidently applied the procedural bar, there had been an ample opportunity for the state courts to consider the issue and correct the defect. The Court also reported that "while it is true the petitioner did not use the precise term 'exception' in response to the court's adverse ruling on the question in issue here, his request to be heard outside the presence of the jury after the court ruled certainly connoted an objection to that ruling . . ." Believing that the petitioner had objected, the court decided the merits in the habeas proceeding.

Finally, the position we adopt here is not in conflict with *Hockenberry v. Sowders, supra.* There, this Court concluded that under *Wainwright*, the federal courts cannot make an independent application of the state's contemporaneous objection rule.

Hockenberry is significantly distinguishable. The contemporaneous objection rule there included the discretionary caveat that the state appellate court could ignore the procedural bar if manifest injustice resulted. This Court merely held that federal courts must, to some extent, defer to a state's assessment that the discretion to ignore the bar should not be exercised. Here, there is doubt as to the factual issue concerning whether or not there was an objection at trial. We do not invade upon the state's discretionary determination concerning its own procedural rule. Rather, we are deciding whether an erroneous factual determination by the state court in applying its nondiscretionary rule should bar federal relief.

That *Hockenberry* requires that we make an assessment as to whether the state procedural ruling is without foundation is clear from the Court's statement that "it is clear that the central question in such an instance is whether the state court denied petitioner's claim on *an adequate* and independent state procedural ground." *Id.* at 115. When the state court erroneously reads a clear record to find no objection by the defendant, the state ground cannot be said to be an adequate one. *See also* footnote 10, above.

[15] F. The Use of News Clippings.

The state repeatedly used newspaper clippings to "refresh the recollection" of defense witnesses regarding the "horrible conditions" at the jail. The defense witnesses in several instances clearly stated that they remembered nothing about the alleged incidents described in the newspapers, yet the state persisted in its line of questioning. The district court correctly found that the state was successfully putting the substance of the articles in evidence. At [sic] the district court stated:[12]

> **[16]** The danger of unfair prejudice to Walker is obvious. Newspaper articles about matters of substantial public controversy (*i.e.*, the jail's "horrible conditions," the prisoners' hunger strike "against medical facilities, bail procedures and overcrowding," Tr. 667, the public probe into the use of drugs by inmates, the destruction of commissary fund records and the state audit) when brought before the jury inhibited a dispassioned consideration of an accused's guilt or innocence. What Cuyahoga County did or didn't do in these matters could not be attributed to the defendant. It appealed to anti-Cuyahoga County provincialism at the expense of the defendant. This heavy baggage was added to the total irrelevance of this evidence on the issues to be decided by the trier of fact.

In justification, the state once again simply relies on the discretion of the state trial court. That is clearly not enough. A state trial judge cannot operate beyond the requirements of the United States Constitution by claiming discretionary authority. We agree with the conclusion of the district court that "parade[ing]" newspaper clippings before the jury in the manner done here con-

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12. App. 158.

stituted transgressions which "invaded the defendant's right to a fair trial." We reject these procedures as abhorrent and repugnant for their inflammatory and prejudicial effect upon the jury.

We need not determine whether each of the alleged errors would, alone, require that we find a deprivation of due process. It is clear that the cumulative effect of the conduct of the state was to arouse prejudice against the defendant to such an extent that he was denied fundamental fairness. The trial was inflamed by marginally relevant and irrelevant evidence that was highly prejudicial. The contrary contentions of the state are supported by neither controlling authority nor considerations of fairness and justice. By allowing the trial to focus more on the claimed corruption of the Sheriff's Department than on the issue of Walker's guilt or innocence, the trial court denied Walker due process of law in violation of the [17] Constitution. We therefore affirm the district court's grant of the writ.

Our close examination of the trial court record compels an additional comment. Such a trial as was conducted here is a reminder of the role the Great Writ must play in our jurisprudence. When a trial court permits the constitutional protections to be overridden by zealous prosecutors without interjecting restraining or curative measures, the federal courts must be alert to act as the district court did here. The methods utilized by the state to obtain this conviction, in the words of Justice Frankfurter, clearly "offend 'a sense of justice'." *Rochin v. California*, 342 U.S. 165, 173 (1952) *citing Brown v. Mississippi*, 297 U.S. 278, 285-6.

III

The remaining issue to be decided is whether the evidence against Walker is so insufficient as to preclude

a new trial. We must hold that under *Jackson v. Virginia*, 443 U.S. 307 (1979) and for the reasons set forth by the district judge, a new trial is not foreclosed.

The state placed Walker at the scene of the crime through testimony of (1) Davidson and Ogletree, accomplices to the crime, (2) Rene Clark, a disinterested eyewitness; and (3) Mabel Mack, wife of the deceased. The state also placed Walker outside of the jail during the relevant period through testimony of (a) Clarence Cash, who allegedly spoke with Walker at an "after hours" bar during June 1972, (b) James Curry, who allegedly spoke with Walker at a garage around mid-June, and (c) Mrs. Willie Mae Hart, who resided near the A&P store and who saw a brown automobile leave the scene of the crime driven by a black man with a bad complexion "similar to" Walker's.

The magistrate rejected the testimony of these individuals as follows: (1) Davidson and Ogletree were promised leniency, and two witnesses testified that Ogletree named Walker [18] because Walker was sleeping with Ogletree's wife; (2) Rene Clark had earlier identified another suspect in a lineup in which Walker participated; (3) Mrs. Mack said only that Walker "looked like" the killer; (4 and 5) Clarence Cash and James Curry had logical inconsistencies within each of their accounts; and (6) Mrs. Hart specifically stated that she was not saying Walker was the man she saw.

The district court held that the magistrate had erred by weighing the testimony and failing to view the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution. Since credibility is not a matter of review for a federal habeas corpus court, *Pigford v. United States*, 518 F.2d 831, 836 (4th Cir. 1975), and since the testimony of the state's witnesses, if believed, would provide sufficient evidence

to support the conviction, the court concluded that Jackson did not preclude retrial.

> Walker's main objection to this conclusion is as follows: Rather than a selective review of the prosecution's case, Jackson requires that all the evidence be weighed so as to ascertain whether any rational trier of fact could find guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.
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> • • •
>
> No matter how favorably the prosecution's case may be viewed, no rational mind could accept the testimony of Ogletree and Davidson over the unsolicited and independent testimony of [certain witnesses for defendant].

This argument must fail since it merely urges this Court to weigh the credibility of the witnesses. This we cannot do. We agree that, from the record, the witnesses for Walker appear more credible than those for the state, and if we were jurors, we might be inclined to vote to acquit in this case. But the inquiry as to sufficiency of the evidence does not require or permit a court "to ask itself whether *it* believes that the evidence at the trial established guilt beyond a reasonable doubt." *Jackson*, 443 U.S. at 319. Looking at the case in the light most [19] favorable to the prosecution appears to mean resolving creditability conflicts in favor of the prosecution. *Compare Jackson*:

> a federal habeas corpus court faced with a record of historical facts that supports conflicting inferences must presume—even if it does not affirmatively appear in the record—that the trier of fact resolved any such conflicts in favor of the prosecution, and must defer to that resolution.

We believe the district court was correct in its conclusion that retrial is not precluded by *Jackson*. Therefore, the grant of the writ and the order granting the state 120 days to retry Walker is AFFIRMED.

[20] BROWN, *Senior Circuit Judge*, concurring in the result.

I concur with the panel opinion that this habeas petitioner, Walker, was denied federal due process by allowing into evidence a great deal of totally irrelevant and highly prejudicial evidence. I recognize that such rulings on evidence must be egregious to amount to constitutional error, but this is such a case. I also agree with the panel opinion that, however, the state introduced enough evidence of guilt to allow the state to try Walker again.

On the other hand, I am concerned that the panel opinion, in dealing with "The John Appling affair" (slip at .....), assumes that there is a problem in the area of *Wainwright v. Sykes*, 433 U.S. 72 (1977) and uses this as a springboard for the *tour de force* that follows. In the course of this rather extended discussion, the opinion suggests, *inter alia*, that a federal habeas court may, under *Wainwright*, reach the merits of an issue where no cause and prejudice is shown, where there is a "technical state procedural bar" and there is "plain error." (Slip at ....., n. 10.) In fact, however, there simply is no *Wainwright* problem to be dealt with at all.

While it is true that the Ohio Court of Appeals did (App. at 6) rely on the failure of defense counsel to object to the procedure whereby Appling was placed on the stand before the jury and claimed his immunity not to testify, it did not rely on any alleged failure to object to questions put to other witnesses calculated to suggest to the jury that Appling's testimony would have been favorable. The

Ohio Supreme Court also did not rely on an alleged failure to object to the testimony of these other witnesses in reaching its decision. Moreover, respondent below, Engle, does not rely in his brief here on any such alleged failure to object to the testimony of these other witnesses. It is this testimony that Walker complained about in district court and in this court. This part of the panel's opinion is dictum and totally unnecessary.

OPINION OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

(Filed January 28, 1981)

C79-2132

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION

RAYMOND WALKER,
Petitioner,

v.

TED ENGLE,
Respondent.

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

(Filed January 28, 1981)

THOMAS, J.

Guy Mack, an off-duty detective on the Canton City Police Department, was shot and killed during a robbery on July 22, 1972 at an A&P Supermarket in Canton, Ohio. At the time, Mr. Mack was off duty shopping with his wife.

The composite evidence of store employees and Warren Davidson and Fred Ogeltree shows that the robbery was committed by four men, three who entered the store, and one (Davidson) who remained outside the store. In 1973 Warren Davidson and Fred Ogeltree were convicted as aiders and abettors in the robbery and homicide and sentenced to life imprisonment. Neither, however, was the triggerman.

In late 1975, while incarcerated at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville, Ogeltree and Davidson contacted Stark County authorities through a local attorney, Harry Schmuck. They implicated Raymond Walker as the triggerman in the homicide. Bennett, said by Ogeltree and Davidson to have participated in the robbery, was never apprehended.

[2] At petitioner's trial, Davidson and Ogeltree were able to identify the fourth man only by the name "Bennett." In return for their testimony against Walker, a recommendation of leniency was made to the Governor by Stark County authorities.

Walker was indicted on March 12, 1976. The first trial ended with a hung jury. At his second trial he was convicted of first degree murder in violation of former Ohio Revised Code §2901.01. His conviction was affirmed by the Fifth District Court of Appeals in June 1977. Walker appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court which, in a divided vote, affirmed his conviction. *State v. Walker*, 55 Ohio St. 2d 208 (1978). On April 23, 1979, the United States Supreme Court denied Walker's petition for a writ of certiorari. *Walker v. Ohio*, 441 U.S. 924 (1979).

In November 1979, Walker filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. §2254. The petition listed three grounds for relief. The first asserts that the

appellate courts in Ohio affirmed his conviction upon a constitutionally deficient standard of review. The second asserts that under the standard of review enunciated in *Jackson v. Virginia*, 443 U.S. 307 (1979), no rational trier of fact upon the evidence of record could have found Walker guilty of the Mack [3] homicide beyond a reasonable doubt.[1] The third ground lists numerous prejudicial trial errors, mainly in the admission of irrelevant and inflammatory testimony, which, cumulatively considered, denied Walker a fair trial.

The Magistrate has filed a 108-page Recommended Report and Decision concluding that on all grounds the petition be granted and that "an order [be] entered discharging Raymond Walker from further confinement." In a lengthy factual review of petitioner's trial transcript, the Magistrate concluded that petitioner was denied a fair trial in violation of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. For the reasons set forth in Part I of this memorandum, this court independently reaches the same conclusion. The trial court permitted the introduction of testimony so irrelevant, prejudicial and inflammatory that it "undermined the integrity of the fact finding process and a fair determination of the principal fact in issue," that is, Walker's alibi defense. (*See* Habeas Corpus Petition, p.2.) The trial errors "offend a sense of justice," *Rochin v. California*, 342 U.S. 165, 173 (1952), and cannot be considered harmless beyond a reasonable doubt. *See Chapman v. California*, 386 U.S. 18 (1967).

The Magistrate also concluded that Walker should be granted an unconditional discharge and the state should not be permitted to retry him because under [4] *Jackson*,

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1. Since petitioner's first ground assumes that the *Jackson* standard should have been applied by the Ohio appellate courts, it merges with this court's consideration of the *Jackson* standard in Part II of this memorandum.

"no rational trier of fact could have found proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt." For the reasons set forth in Part II of this memorandum, this court disagrees. It is concluded that *Jackson* neither requires nor permits such a judgment and resulting freedom from retrial if the prosecution so elects. Apart from the prejudicial evidence, the prosecution produced sufficient other evidence which, viewed in the light most favorable to the prosecution, would permit a reasonable trier of fact to find Walker guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

I.

At the second trial, Walker's defense was that he could not have committed the Mack homicide at the A&P store in Canton, Ohio on July 22, 1972 because he was incarcerated in the Cuyahoga County jail.

Walker was indicted on February 22, 1972 for attempted burglary. At his arraignment on April 14, 1972, he pled not guilty; and bail was set at $5,000. He was, however, unable to secure a bond for his release; and Cuyahoga County Court records indicate that he was then incarcerated from April 14 until August 1, 1972 when the attempted burglary charges were dismissed.

A review of the transcript of Walker's trial reveals that the trial judge considered Walker's alibi defense to place the "character" of the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department on trial. The Ohio Supreme Court, in affirming Walker's conviction, stated that Walker

> **[5]** having offered the records as proof of the truth therein stated, as well as proof [sic] the facts reasonably to be inferred therefrom . . . placed in issue the credibility generally of the records, the record making process and the record keepers.

55 Ohio St. 2d at 214.

An elementary rule of evidence, both under Ohio and federal law, is that matters offered in evidence must be relevant to the issues of the case and that evidence which is wholly irrelevant, that is, incapable of affording any legitimate presumption of inference as to a fact in issue, should be excluded. Under Ohio law, relevant evidence is "any matter of fact the effect, tendency, or design of which, when presented to the mind, is to produce a persuasion concerning the existence of some other matter of fact—a persuasion either affirmative or disaffirmative of its existence." *Barnett v. State*, 104 Ohio St. 298, 306, 135 N.E. 647, 650-51 (1922). Thus, where a fact "has a causal connection or logical relation to another fact so as to make the other fact either more or less probable, the first fact is competent or is relevant to prove the second. . . ." *Id.*, at 306, 135 N.E. at 650. This is the standard the court shall utilize in assessing the prejudicial effect of the trial court's evidentiary rulings.[2]

States are afforded wide latitude in fashioning and applying their own rules of evidence and criminal **[6]** procedure. *Manning v. Rose*, 507 F.2d 889, 892 (6th Cir. 1974). Therefore, claimed trial errors relating to the admissibility of evidence are matters of state law and not generally subject to redress in habeas corpus cases. But

> where the trial errors or irregularities infringe upon a specific constitutional protection or are so prejudicial as to amount to a denial of due process . . . a justiciable federal issue is presented in a habeas corpus proceeding.

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2. A similar definition prevails under federal law. "'Relevant evidence' means evidence having any tendency to make the existence of any fact that is of consequence to the determination of the action more probable or less probable than it would be without the evidence." Fed.R.Evid. 401.

Atwell v. Arkansas, 426 F.2d 912, 915 (8th Cir. 1970); *Maglaya v. Buckhoe,* 515 F.2d 265, 268 (6th Cir. 1975). In *Maggit v. Wyrick,* 533 F.2d 383, 385 (8th Cir. 1976), the court reviewed various formulations of this due process standard:

> In order to establish a denial of due process the petitioner must prove that the asserted error was so "gross", *Taylor v. Minnesota, supra* at 1121, "conspicuously prejudicial", *United States ex rel. Cannon v. Maroney,* 373 F.2d 908, 910 (3d Cir. 1967), or otherwise of such magnitude that it fatally infected the trial and failed to afford petitioner the fundamental fairness which is the essence of due process. *Lisenba v. California,* 314 U.S. 219, 236, 62 S.Ct. 280, 289, 86 L.Ed. 166, 179 (1941). In making this determination courts must review the totality of the facts in the case pending before them and analyze the fairness of the particular trial under consideration. *United States ex rel. Bibbs v. Twomey,* 506 F.2d 1220, 1223 (7th Cir. 1974). . . .

In the Fifth Circuit the standard is whether the prejudicial evidence is "material in the sense of crucial, critical, highly significant." *Corpus v. Beto,* 469 F.2d 953, 956 (5th Cir. 1972), *quoting Lawrence v. Wainwright,* 445 F.2d 281, 282 (5th Cir. 1971). No precise rule can be laid down. This court is convinced, however, that under any of the above due process formulations, the admission of highly prejudicial testimony that had no bearing on the elements of the state's case **[7]** or on Walker's alibi denied him due process of law. The injection of testimony dealing with the following matters, cumulatively considered, was fundamentally unfair to the defendant and fatally infected the fairness of his trial.

A.

The fact of a criminal conviction of "Major" [Edward] Paine was brought before the jury over the strenuous objections of defense counsel. Paine had been the Warden of the Cuyahoga County jail. Although the dates of his employment there are not exactly clear, it appears that he was a jail official before and after, but not during, Walker's claimed confinement. The prosecutor was permitted to question two defense witnesses about Paine's conviction. Frank Urankar, a deputy sheriff at the jail, testified that Paine was not associated with the jail in the summer of 1972 but rather "came back just a little bit before the election in October or November, '72." The prosecutor pressed on:

Q: And then, Major Paine came in around November you believe?

A: He came in with Sheriff Kreiger in '69 and he was with us for few years and then he left.

Q: Did he come in as a major?

A: He was the warden when he came in.

Q: He started at the top in other words, right?

A: He was—

Mr. Tolliver: Object to relevancy.

The Court: Overruled.

[8] A: He was a major when he left and when he came back. If I'm correct—I can't remember.

Q: He's no longer with the Sheriff's Department now is he?

A: No, sir.

Particularizing the questioning:

Q: As a matter of fact he's not with the Sheriff's Department because he was indicted and found guilty of—

Mr. Tolliver: Object, judge.

Q: [T]heft of property, isn't that true?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

A: He was indicted right.

Q: And he was found guilty?

A: He was found guilty.

Q: Of theft of property from the jail?

A: Property of the jail?

Q: Is that true?

A: I think it was something about two guns that were missing.

Q: What was it evidence?

Mr. Tolliver: Continuing objection, judge, relevancy.

The Court: No, it's very relevant in this case. Overruled.

A: Probably was the evidence. I don't know.

Steven Popovich, who had worked with Urankar as a corporal in jail security, was similarly questioned.

This testimony bore no relevance to the state's case or any issue concerning the accuracy of jail records or record keeping procedures or, more generally, to the reliability of jail security. Contrary to the trial judge's on-the-record

conclusion that Paine's [9] conviction was "very relevant in this case," it had no tendency, to make the truth or falsity of Walker's alibi more or less probable than it would be without the evidence. Paine's conviction was not an element of the crime for which Walker was charged. Nor does the fact of that conviction make more or less probable any fact bearing on jail security (which would be pertinent to Walker's alibi) or the credibility of jail personnel responsible for jail security during Walker's claimed incarceration. Its sole purpose and clear effect was to prejudice the jury's consideration of Walker's alibi.

B.

The State Auditor's Rebuttal Testimony

As part of Walker's defense, his jail commissary records, as well as testimony from several jail deputies concerning those records, were introduced for the purpose of showing numerous transactions in his account. The commissary records were circumstantial evidence that Walker was in jail on the dates of the transactions in his account. The probative value of those records was undermined, however, by testimony elicited by the prosecution's cross-examination of various jail deputies that inmates other than Walker could easily have made the purchases in his commissary account.

The prosecution did not stop with this proper and permissible impeachment. In a transparent attempt to show general financial corruption in the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, the prosecution, with [10] court permission, called Frank Lancianese, an examiner for the Office of the State Auditor, as a rebuttal witness. He testified, over the strong objection of defense counsel, that an audit of the Sheriff's Department revealed a

shortage of $66,000 in commissary account funds between January 1969 and October 1975 and that the State Auditor's Office had encountered "obstacles" from the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department in gaining access to commissary records.[3] The examiner was permitted to go into detail concerning the Sheriff Department's financial accounting methods. This had nothing to do with jail security or record keeping procedures related to the jail population. Nor did the auditor's report on commissary funds relate to the issue raised by Walker's use of the commissary records as circumstantial proof that Walker was present in the jail to make the transactions in his account.

The Examiner's testimony went even farther afield when he was questioned, over objection, about the possible misuse of jail vending machine profits. He testified that there was approximately $9,000 of vending machine commissions unaccounted for by the Sheriff's Department. In addition, he was permitted to testify that the use of some of the accounted for vending machine profits was in violation of Ohio law.

[11] The admission of the state examiner's testimony,[4] like that of "Major" Paine's conviction, bore no relationship to the state's case or issues raised by Walker's alibi defense. It was wholly extraneous, highly prejudicial and calculated to sway the jury's consideration of Walker's alibi on a basis that "smacks of guilt by association."

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3. The examiner testified over objection that the Auditor's Office was able to gain possession of only some jail commissary records by a state court action.

4. Other witnesses were also questioned about the Examiner's audit. Sergeant Frank Urankar was asked if he knew "that certain commissary records were burned before the audit. . . .?" He answered, "No, sir" before defense counsel could appropriately object with, "What's this got to do with Raymond Walker?" *See also* the cross-examination of Steven Popovich (Tr. 737).

(Mag. 94.) Indeed, that this was the purpose is apparent from the prosecutor's final argument:

> We have brought the records to you concerning the audit of the sheriff's department for one reason alone. To show you that all the thieves and the bad people weren't on the inside of the jail; that if you lie and steal what says you won't let a prisoner out for a weekend or a few days. You know, there's a saying in the computer business that you put garbage in you get garbage out. That's what you have in those records.

C.

Further putting the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department and jail in a bad light that undoubtedly inflamed the jury, the prosecution was permitted, without any basis in the record, to insinuate that the testimony of several defense witnesses was being coached by a member of the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Frank Urankar was cross-examined as follows:

Q: Do you know a man by the name of Tom Booth?

A: Tom Booth?

Q: Yes.

[12] A: Yes.

Q: And he's a detective with the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department is that true?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: And were you down here Friday?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: And was Tom Booth down here Friday?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: And during the conduct of this trial where was Tom Booth?

A: He was in this room.

Q: Had he been subpoenaed as a witness?

A: No, sir.

Q: He was down here on his own time?

A: That's right. That's what he told me.

Q: And did he also tell you that he came down because he had never seen a trial before?

At this point defense counsel objected "to all this. . . ."

The Court: Overruled.

A: He didn't say that to me.

Mr. Tolliver: Note my exception.

Q: Do you know why he came?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

A: No, sir.

Q: And were you aware that he was taking notes in the courtroom?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, Judge.

The Court: Overruled.

Mr. Tolliver: That's a fact not in evidence.

A: No, sir. After I—he came out and he said he was called into the chamber by the judge and he

told me that the judge asked him why he was here and what was he doing in court. That's all I know.

[13] Q: But you also know that during every recess prior to that time he came out of the courtroom and he had conversations with all of you didn't he?

Again Mr. Tolliver objected, "Judge, note my continuing objection."

The Court: Overruled.

A: We talked to him but he didn't say nothing about the trial.

Q: What did he talk about?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

Mr. Tolliver: Man's down here on his own time.

A: I didn't know anything about that. I have to come down until last Thursday when I got the subpoena. I didn't even know what this case was about.

These same insinuations were made during the cross-examination of Lawrence Pullin, a security sergeant at the jail. The Magistrate's conclusion with regard to this testimony bears repeating:

> The examination of Mr. Urankar and Mr. [Pullin] concerning the presence of Mr. Booth in the courtroom was completely improper. It was designed to convey to the jury the impression that the trial was being monitored by the office of the Sheriff of Cuyahoga County, with an implication of impropriety, and that the defense witnesses were being coached by Mr. Booth. This was a public trial and all citizens, including Mr. Booth, were entitled to attend. If the

prosecution had any reason to believe that Mr. Booth's presence in the courtroom was violative of any court order or rule the matter should have been presented to the court without the jury being present and with Mr. Booth being called to the witness stand (not the judge's chambers) to explain his presence and conduct. It should not have been dragged before the jury with unproven inferences and innuendos adverse to the defense.

D.

In a further effort to disparage Cuyahoga County authorities, a rebuttal witness of the prosecution **[14]** was permitted to speculate about the delay in bringing Walker to Stark County for trial. Canton Police Sergeant William Newkirk was asked:

Q: When were you able to locate Raymond Walker?[5]

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, judge.

The Court: Overruled.

A: First time he was actually located was in May of 1975 when it was—he [was] picked up in Chicago, Illinois. That was on the capias out of Cuyahoga County.

Q: Did—were you able to bring him to Stark County as a result of that?

A: No, we weren't. We weren't able to get him back to Ohio due to the fact that—

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5. Newkirk testified that Stark County authorities had been looking for Walker as a suspect in the A&P store robbery and homicide since early 1973.

Mr. Tolliver: Objection to this, judge. Supposed to be rebuttal.

The Court: Overruled.

A: Due to the fact that either Cuyahoga County would not extradite on their capias or Illinois wouldn't permit them. I'm not sure as to this day why it happened.

Q: Did you take that to the FBI?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, judge.

The Court: He may answer yes or no.

A: Yes.

Q: Make any attempt to have the FBI extradite?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Yeah. That's sustained.

Once again the jury was presented with a highly irrelevant and unsupported insinuation, creating more prejudice, [15] that Cuyahoga County authorities impeded Walker's extradition from Illinois to Stark County. Although Newkirk stated that he was "not sure to this day why it happened," the implication was clear: Cuyahoga County authorities had something to hide by impeding extradition. With the accused's rights hanging in the balance, the jury should not have received such prejudicial conjecture. It impaired the jury's perception of the defendant and his alibi defense.

E.

The John Appling Testimony

As part of its case-in-chief, the prosecution called John Appling to the stand. Appling was currently serving a nine to fifty-five year sentence at the Chillicothe Cor-

rectional Institution, but in 1972 he had been incarcerated at the Cuyahoga County jail and had served as a "range boss" of the cell block to which Walker was assigned on the fifth floor of the jail. Appling refused to be sworn, stating, "I don't want to testify." The judge excused the jury and proceeded to question Appling on his refusal to testify.

Q: Is there a reason for not testifying in this case?

A: I don't know nothing about it.

Q: You know nothing about it. And you do not want to be under oath and make that statement to the jury?

A: I don't want to even be here.

Q: Are you invoking the Fifth Amendment you don't want to testify in regards to it might incriminate you?

[16] A: Yes.

Q: And that is your statement, sir. Will you please tell me that is your statement, sir?

A: Taking the Fifth Amendment.

Q: It's not whether you want to testify, sir. I'm asking you is the reason for not testifying is because you are invoking the Fifth Amendment?

A: Yes.

The prosecutor stated to the court that Appling had knowledge of certain Cuyahoga County jail activities, that he had himself been allowed to walk free from the jail, and that he had seen Walker outside of the jail when Walker should have been confined.[6] After an in-chambers

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6. Walker's counsel disputed the contention that Appling's testimony would be as the prosecutor anticipated, stating instead that it would be favorable to Walker's defense.

(off the record) conversation between the trial judge and Appling, the jury was recalled. Appling took the stand without being sworn. He was permitted to state his name and that he was presently located at "Chillicothe Correctional in transit to Lucasville." He was asked by the court, "Alright, and you refused to testify, is that right, sir?" He answered, "Yes."

This was not the last the jury heard of John Appling, however. The prosecution questioned seven other witnesses about Appling. Ricardo Brown (the acting jail warden in 1972) was asked if Appling was confined in the Cuyahoga County jail between April 14 and August 1, 1972. He answered, "I believe he was." Willie Hightower, a jail inmate testified on cross-examination that Appling [17] was a "range boss" on the fifth floor. The prosecutor's questions were clearly designed to show that Appling enjoyed a special status and privileges in the jail:

> Q: And the man that they pick for the range boss is usually the man that's got some control over the prisoners, right?
>
> A: Yea.
>
> Q: And he's someone that the other prisoners look to, right?
>
> A: Yes.
>
> Q: And when they got problems with the deputies they kind of go to the range boss and he works it out for them right?
>
> A: No, they don't work that like that. The only thing a range boss can do is the guard come and ask the guys for phone calls or do some work. He picks out who he wants to pick out, but he can't do nothing like that.

Q: Doesn't the range boss also back in there keep people under control?

A: Yeah, but they don't have to.

Q: That's why he gets to be the range boss isn't it?

A: Yes.

Q: Because he's the man?

A: Yes.

Hightower, after denying that Appling received special visiting privileges with his wife, stated

A: The least you can do as a range boss as far as getting something from a guard would be [to] get extra phone calls and maybe get over visits, and like downstairs with visiting privileges or like talking through this gate they got up there. They let you sit down at a table downstairs instead.

Another defense witness, "Stretch" Myers, who had been incarcerated with Davidson and Ogeltree at Lucasville, testified for purposes of showing that [18] Davidson and Ogeltree were attempting to frame Walker. On cross-examination, the prosecutor returned to the familiar theme of John Appling:

Q: Now, you rode back in the car from Lucasville with a man named Appling didn't you?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: Did you have any conversation with him?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have any conversation with him about what would happen to him when he got to Lucasville?

A: John Appling?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

Q: Yea.

A: John Appling weighs two hundred and sixty pounds. There's not going to be much happen to him.

• • • •

A few questions later:

Q: Did you say anything to him about the—if he plays it right that he can have a nice job when he's down there?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, Judge. Conversation between him and somebody else.

The Court: Overruled.

Mr. Tolliver: And that somebody else hasn't—

The Court: Just a minute. Overruled. You may answer Mr. Myers.

A: Would you repeat the question please?

Q: Did you say anything about arranging if he testified right or didn't testify or whatever that you could arrange a job.

A: I did not do any talking. He did the talking.

Q: Nothing was mentioned about a job at Lucasville?

[19] A: You mean could I give him a job? I'm in no position. I can't give you a—that's foolish.

Q: Trustees have no control over jobs and people in various offices and in the jail?

A: Trustees? Trustees at Lucasville. There are no Trustees.

Q: Whatever. Prisoners have absolutely no control over who does what in Lucasville?

A: That's correct. They have a personnel department and that's it.

Q: Prisoners work in the personnel department?

A: Yes. I do.

Q: You work in a personnel department don't you?

A: True.

Q: And what's your job in the personnel department?

A: My responsibilities are midnight counts, also payroll and A.W.O.L.'s, etc. They have a committee who does the hirings of six people from the administration. They vote whether you go to work. They vote whether you don't.

The prosecutor's questioning of Hightower permitted the jury to infer that one of defendant's witnesses may have offered a job to Appling to persuade him not to testify. But more than that, the prosecutor's questioning of witness after witness about John Appling obviously sought to suggest to the jury that Appling's testimony would have been helpful to the prosecution had he testified and not asserted his Fifth Amendment privilege. As the Magistrate stated:

> This tactic was, in all probability, more beneficial to the prosecution than if Mr. Appling had actually testified. First, Mr. Appling appears before the jury as a mystery man, refusing to testify. Next, the jury discovers that not only was he in jail when Raymond Walker was supposed to have been there (special note

taken of July 21, 1972), but that he was the range boss, the "main man" of Mr. Walker's cell block. Then the suggestion is planted that Mr. Appling had been promised **[20]** some benefit for not testifying. The obvious conclusion to be drawn by the jury is that the prosecution tried to present evidence which would have been harmful to Mr. Walker's defense and was thwarted in that effort. All the while the prosecution was aware that Mr. Appling had stated to the judge that he knew nothing pertinent to the case and that defense counsel had represented that the night before Mr. Appling appeared in court he had stated he was not going to testify in the manner which the prosecution believed he might.

(Mag. 47.)

In *United States v. Vandetti*, 623 F.2d 1144 (6th Cir. 1980), the court discussed the constitutional problems associated with permitting the prosecution to put a witness on the stand who will assert a Fifth Amendment privilege. The court cautioned that at the least it carries a "potential for unfair prejudice" and should be allowed only "where the prosecutor's case would be seriously prejudiced by a failure to offer him as a witness. . . ." Two constitutional protections are impinged upon by the practice:

> [First,] such a witness permits the party calling the witness to build its case out of inferences arising from the use of the testimonial privilege, *Namet v. United States*, 373 U.S. 179, 186 (1963), a violation of due process.
>
> • • • •
>
> Second, calling such a witness encroaches upon the right to confrontation. *Douglas v. Alabama*, 380 U.S. 415, 419 (1965). Inferences from such a refusal

> may "add critical weight to the prosecution's case in a form not subject to cross-examination, and thus unfairly prejudic[e] the defendant." *Namet v. United States, supra,* 187.

Id., at 1148.

Vandetti's rationale applies here. The repeated questioning of witnesses, over objection, about Mr. Appling, after he had refused to testify, was "intended to build **[21]** [the prosecution's] case out of inferences arising from the use of the testimonial privilege." Since Mr. Appling refused to testify, it was impossible for the defense to refute the suggestion obviously being made to the jury by the prosecution, *i.e.*, that it had "tried to present evidence which would have been harmful to Mr. Walker's defense and was thwarted in that effort." (Mag. 47.) The entire line of questioning about Appling leads this court to conclude that Walker's right to a fair trial was grossly prejudiced by the suggestion that evidence was not being presented to the jury which would have established Walker's guilt.

F.

Finally, the repeated use of newspaper clippings by the prosecutor to "refresh the recollection" of numerous defense witnesses as to events extraneous to Walker, and the charge against him deeply invaded the defendant's right to a fair trial. Frank Urankar was cross-examined by the prosecution about a prisoner strike in July 1972 and the "horrible conditions" at the jail which prompted investigations by county commissioners and other community groups.[7]

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7. All of these matters are of doubtful relevance to Walker's alibi and easily susceptible to creating a prejudicial effect upon the jury.

Q: Just for a couple of days? And didn't even the county commissioners come down to that jail and community groups come into that jail because of the horrible conditions?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, Judge. What's this got to do with Raymond Walker?

[22] The Court: Overruled. If he's familiar he can answer.

A: Well, conditions are better today.

Q: Sir, I'm going back to 1972. My question was do you recall when during 1972 specifically the month of July the county commissioners came into that jail as well as some common pleas judges and community groups?

A: I didn't see any county commissioner on my shift or any judge on my shift in the jail.

Q: Were you aware of their coming into that jail whether they were in on your shift or not?

A: No, sir.

Q: Did you read the newspapers?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, Judge.

The Court: Overruled.

A: Like I said I didn't see any county commissioners or any judge in the jail.

Q: Did you read the newspapers?

A: This was four years ago.

Q: Did you read the newspapers four years ago?

A: Yes.

Mr. Tolliver: Judge, objection to this.

The Court: Overruled.

(State's Exhibit 17 and 18 marked by the Reporter)

Mr. Tolliver: (At the Bench Outside of the Jury's Hearing) My further objection would be that these were taken during the daytime, not when he was working.

The Court: Ask the question first.

Q: Sir, I'm going to show you what's been marked for the purpose of identification as State's Exhibit Eighteen and ask you to examine that and state whether you recognize it and if so as what?

A: Well, I told you before.

Q: Sir, my question is do you recognize that?

A: I remember a hunger strike because of medication complaints. I see plumbing and overcrowding. **[23]** I told you without questioning that they were sleeping on the floors; that the jail was overcrowded. I knew about that.

The prosecutor again paraded newspaper clippings before the jury to "refresh the recollection" of Steven Popovich about a drug probe at the jail. Objections were lodged and overruled by the trial judge, who stated, "I'm just permitting him only to use it to refresh his memory, that's all." But subsequent questioning by the prosecutor demonstrates that he was (successfully) putting the substance of the articles in evidence before the jury.

Q: Do you remember anyone denying the use—that the investigation turned up anything to substan-

tiate charges that drugs were being used in the county jail?[8]

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

A: No, not according to that [*i.e.*, the news article].

Q: You don't—you didn't. Well, let me ask you to read paragraph two and see if that refreshes your memory.

Mr. Tolliver: Objection, judge.

* * * *

Q: Does that refresh your recollection?

A: According to what the paper says.

* * * *

Q: Do you remember also that those [commissary] records were burned?

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

[24] A: No, I don't remember anything about that.

Q: Take a look at that and see if that refreshes your recollection at all concerning that.

Mr. Tolliver: Note my continuing objection, Judge.

The Court: This is just being used to refresh the memory only.

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8. Once again the subject matter of the questioning bears no relevancy to Walker's alibi.

Although any document, including a newspaper article, may be used to refresh a witnesses' recollection, the manner in which they were used before the jury tended to inflame them. The prosecutor went out of his way to let the jury know that events at the jail had made newspaper headlines. (*See* Tr. 665-67, 734, 881.) The examination could not have been more effective (or prejudicial) had the prosecutor simply read the complete news articles to the jury.

The danger of unfair prejudice to Walker is obvious. Newspaper articles about matters of substantial public controversy (*i.e.*, the jail's "horrible conditions," the prisoners' hunger strike "against medical facilities, bail procedures and overcrowding," Tr. 667, the public probe into the use of drugs by inmates, the destruction of commissary fund records and the state audit) when brought before the jury inhibited a dispassioned consideration of an accused's guilt or innocence. What Cuyahoga County did or did not do in these matters could not be attributed to the defendant. It appealed to anti-Cuyahoga County provincialism at the expense of the defendant. This heavy baggage was added to the total irrelevance of this evidence on the issues to be decided by the trier of fact.

[25] G.

Based upon the above analysis,[9] this court concludes that Walker did not receive a fair trial. The record is

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9. The Magistrate also utilizes the prosecutor's final argument as a basis for finding the due process violation. Defense counsel objected only to the prosecutor's final argument concerning the testimony of Mabel Potts. The final argument was not raised on appeal and is not presented as a basis for relief in Walker's petition. It is therefore not appropriately considered as a basis for relief by this court. *See generally, Jackson v. Denno*, 378 U.S. 368 (1964); *Wainwright v. Sykes*, 433 U.S. 72 (1977). The court has reviewed the trial errors attributed to conduct of the trial judge and does not believe they merit independent consideration.

replete with testimony on irrelevant matters of substantial prejudice to Walker's defense. Gambling, drugs, prisoner strikes, possible financial corruption, a conviction of a third party for theft from office, and insinuations about the coaching of testimony and efforts to hinder Stark County's prosecution of Walker produced a trial atmosphere substantially susceptible to prejudice and wholly at odds with traditional notions of fair play and justice. Petitioner's third ground for relief is therefore granted. We turn then to petitioner's challenge to the sufficiency of the evidence.

II.

A.

Jackson v. Virginia

Prior to the Supreme Court's decision in *Jackson v. Virginia*, 443 U.S. 307 (1979), federal courts applied the "no evidence" standard of *Thompson v. Louisville*, 362 U.S. 199 (1960) when ruling on a habeas corpus **[26]** petition asserting that a criminal conviction rested upon a lack of evidence. Strictly speaking, *Thompson* was not concerned with the sufficiency or weight of evidence to support a conviction, but only with whether the conviction "rests upon any evidence at all." 362 U.S. at 199. The court held that a conviction based upon a record wholly devoid of any relevant evidence of an essential element of the offense violated due process of law. Hence, only where there was "no evidence" supportive of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt on each of the essential elements of the crime was there a constitutional violation entitling a petitioner to relief. The "no evidence" standard did not involve the notion of weighing the sufficiency of evidence justifying conviction.[10]

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10. As stated by Chief Justice Warren, in *Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 378 U.S. 184, 202 (1964) (dissenting), "A mere modicum of evidence may satisfy a 'no evidence' standard."

In re Winship, 397 U.S. 358 (1970), however, seriously eroded the due process underpinnings of the "no evidence" standard. *Winship* dealt with the sufficiency of evidence required under due process to support a conviction. It held that due process protected an accused against conviction "except upon proof beyond a reasonable doubt of every fact necessary to constitute the crime with which [the accused] is charged." 397 U.S. at 364.

In *Jackson*, the Court recognized the effect of the *Winship* standard on a federal court's review of state criminal convictions:

> **[27]** The standard of proof beyond a reasonable doubt . . . "plays a vital role in the American scheme of criminal procedure," because it operates to give "concrete substance" to the presumption of innocence, to ensure against unjust convictions, and to reduce the risk of factual error in a criminal proceeding. 397 U.S., at 363. At the same time, by impressing upon the factfinder the need to reach a subjective state of near certitude of the guilt of the accused, the standard symbolizes the significance that our society attaches to the criminal sanction and thus to liberty itself. *Id.*, at 372 (Harlan, J., concurring).
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>
> Yet a properly instructed jury may occasionally convict even when it can be said that no rational trier of fact could find guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, and the same may be said of a trial judge sitting as jury. In a federal trial, such an occurrence has traditionally been deemed to require reversal of the conviction. [Citations omitted.]

Id., at 315-317.

A federal court therefore "has a duty to assess the historic facts when it is called upon to apply a constitutional standard to a conviction obtained in state court." *Jackson, supra,* at 318.

The Magistrate quotes the last paragraph of the Court's analysis in *Jackson*:

> We hold that in a challenge to a state criminal conviction brought under 28 U.S.C. §2254—if the settled procedural prerequisites for such a claim have otherwise been satisfied—the applicant is entitled to habeas corpus relief if it is found that upon the record evidence adduced at the trial no rational trier of fact could have found proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

443 U.S. at 324.

However, this brief holding needs to be interpreted in the context of the Court's earlier pin-pointing of the issue which the federal habeas corpus court must decide. Thus the Court stated:

> **[28]** But this inquiry does not require a court to "ask itself whether *it* believes that the evidence at the trial established guilty beyond a reasonable doubt." *Woodby v. INS,* 385 U.S., at 282 (emphasis added). Instead, the relevant question is whether, after viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution, *any* rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt. See *Johnson v. Louisiana,* 406 U.S. at 362. This familiar standard gives full play to the responsibility of the trier of fact fairly to resolve conflicts in the testimony, to weigh the evidence, and to draw reasonable inferences from basic facts to ultimate facts. Once a defendant has been found guilty of the crime

> charged, the factfinder's role as weigher of the evidence is preserved through a legal conclusion that upon judicial review *all of the evidence* is to be considered in the light most favorable to the prosecution. The criterion thus impinges upon "jury" discretion only to the extent necessary to guarantee the fundamental protection of due process of law.[13]

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13. The question whether the evidence is constitutionally sufficient is of course wholly unrelated to the question of how rationally the verdict was actually reached. Just as the standard announced today does not permit a court to make its own subjective determination of guilty or innocence, it does not require scrutiny of the reasoning process actually used by the factfinder—if known. See generally 3 F. Wharton, Criminal Procedure §520 (12th ed. 1975 and Supp. 1978).

443 U.S. at 318-19. After the holding quoted by the Magistrate and after reviewing the *Jackson* facts, the majority significantly further delimited the power of the federal habeas corpus court in applying the new *Jackson* principle:

> Only under a theory that the prosecution was under an affirmative duty to rule out every hypothesis except that of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt could this petitioner's challenge be sustained. That theory the Court has rejected in the past. *Holland v. United States*, 348 U.S. 121, 140. We decline to adopt it today. Under the standard **[29]** established in this opinion as necessary to preserve the due process protection recognized in *Winship*, a federal habeas corpus court faced with a record of historical facts that supports conflicting inferences must presume—even if it does not affirmatively appear in the record—that the trier of fact resolved any such conflicts in favor of the prosecution, and must defer to that resolution.

Id., at 326.

B.

The State's Case

This court need not review the testimony of each prosecution witness. But for purposes of analysis under *Jackson,* the testimony of several key witnesses will be assessed.

Davidson and Ogeltree both testified concerning Walker's planning of and participation in the A&P store robbery and homicide. In virtually all respects, their testimony corroborated one another as to the details of the crime—Walker enlisting the aid of Ogeltree who took Walker to Davidson, Davidson's theft of a white Plymouth automobile at Walker's request to be used in the robbery along with Walker's use of a brown Maverick, the aborted robbery attempt on July 21, 1972, the return to Canton on July 22, the robbery, homicide and getaway.

Davidson testified that Walker, Ogeltree and a man named Bennett, who also participated in the robbery, entered the A&P store armed with handguns. Ogeltree testified that he saw Walker shoot Guy Mack at one of the checkout counters. Three shots were [30] fired, two of which struck Mr. Mack, fatally wounding him.

In his analysis, the Magistrate frankly states that he is "assessing the credibility of the testimony of Messrs. Davidson and Ogeltree. . . ." Davidson and Ogeltree are "inherently unbelievable" because, in the Magistrate's view, Ogeltree may have harbored a personal grudge against Walker.[11] In addition, he noted that both Ogeltree

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11. Defense testimony suggested that Ogeltree was lying about Walker's participation and the robbery and homicide because Walker had been romantically involved with Ogeltree's former wife. While this was certainly a matter affecting Ogletree's credibility, the jury was entitled to reject the inference the defense wished to be drawn. The marital relationship between Ogeltree and his wife had apparently ended well before Walker became involved with her. Moreover, the end of the marital relationship had occurred several years before the robbery and homicide.

and Davidson stood to gain a recommendation of leniency to the Governor if they identified and testified against Mr. Mack's killer.

By frankly "assessing the credibility" of state's witnesses Ogeltree and Davidson, the Magistrate assumed a function that belonged alone to the state court trier of fact. In deferring to the presumption "that the trier of fact resolved any . . . conflicts in favor of the prosecution," as the federal habeas corpus court [31] must do, it is not for this court (nor the Magistrate) to assess the credibility of any of the state's witnesses.[12]

Clarence Cash, an operator of an "after hours" bar in Cleveland and acquaintance of Warren Davidson and Raymond Walker, testified that he had a conversation with Walker at the Pink Lady Bar in Cleveland sometime in late May or June of 1972. He stated that Walker asked him, "How was Bay-Bay on a job?" Bay-Bay is a nickname for Davidson and "job" is a street term for robbery. He further testified that he saw Walker at the bar on another occasion sometime before June 18, 1972.

James Curry, a "running mate" or friend of Davidson and Ogeltree, testified that he talked with Walker around mid-June of 1972 at a garage on 125th street. The testimony of Cash and Curry is important because it places Walker not in jail but free in Cleveland in June 1972.

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12. Apart from the *Jackson* limitation in the function of the federal habeas corpus court, it is always true that only the trier of fact is able to measure witness credibility. Pleading a cold transcript is no substitute for personally viewing the witness. The demeanor of witnesses in the presentation of live testimony is an invaluable tool which only the trier of fact can evaluate. Courts have repeatedly held that the credibility of witnesses is not a matter of review for a federal habeas corpus court. *Pigford v. United States*, 518 F.2d 831, 836 (4th Cir. 1975); *Edwards v. Sasser*, 462 F.Supp. 374, 376 (E.D. Va. 1979). *Jackson* has not altered that standard.

It directly conflicts with Walker's alibi defense that he was incarcerated during that period of time.

The Magistrate discredits the testimony of both Cash and Curry. The testimony of Mr. Curry is thus discounted:

> [32] Mr. Curry, who was picked up as a suspect by Officer Floyd as resembling one of the persons depicted in composites circulated by the Canton Police and by his own admission "a running mate" of Warren Davidson and Fred Ogeltree, fixed his conversation as having taken place during the week before Roosevelt Holden was killed. That would have placed it about June 11, 1972. The record establishes without any contradiction that on June 12, 1972, Raymond Walker appeared before [a] judge of the Common Pleas Court of Cuyahoga County. That being so, he could hardly have been on the street a day earlier.

(Mag. 104.) The first difficulty with this analysis is that the Clerk of Court's records did not show that Walker was in court on June 12, although the jail records indicate that he had a court appearance on that date. This discrepancy was for the jury, not this court (or the Magistrate), to resolve. Further, the Magistrate deduces that the conversation between Walker and Curry was "about June 11, 1972." He reaches this conclusion because Curry testified that the conversation was "during the week before Roosevelt Holden was killed (stipulated to have happened on June 18, 1972)." The Magistrate then concludes, "That being so, Walker could hardly have been on the street a day earlier," that is, one day before Walker's June 12 court appearance. Resolving any conflict in the evidence concerning the exact day of the conversation was a factual judgment for the jury to make. Viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution, this court

(and the Magistrate) must presume that the jury concluded that a conversation [33] occurred and indeed that it happened within the time frame testified to by Curry.[13]

The prosecution produced a distinterested eyewitness, Rene Clark, who was within fifteen feet of the checkout counter where Mr. Mack was shot. She testified that she got a good look at the robber at the checkout counter. She positively identified Walker as the man who shot Mr. Mack. She did not change her in-court identification despite a rigorous cross-examination by Walker's counsel. He attacked her in-court identification by referring to a line-up in which she did not identify Walker and placed a question mark by the number of another stand-in. On redirect, she testified that she purposefully made a misidentification out of fear. This is the redirect interrogation:

> Q. Miss Clark, going to that particular lineup situation I'd like you to tell the jury fully what happened, how you came about circling number one and putting the question mark. Explain to them what you have explained to me previously.
>
> Mr. Tolliver: Objection to this.
>
> The Court: Overruled.
>
> [34] A. Well, they called me and I came down and I got a son. He's two months old now and I

---

13. Similarly doubting the credibility of Cash's testimony, the Magistrate queries, "[W]hy Raymond Walker had to be led to the neighborhood car-thief (Warren Davidson) by Fred Ogeltree the morning of his planned crime when he had been inquiring about the same person [with Cash] almost two months earlier?" Again, however, this is a matter for the jury to settle. Viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution, this court (and the Magistrate) must presume that the jury resolved any conflicts in the evidence in favor of the prosecution and concluded that the conversation occurred between Cash and Walker as Cash testified.

went in and I noticed the man when I went in there, but I got a cold chill, you know what I'm saying?

Q. Now, when you say you noticed the man when you walked in there what do you mean?

A. I recognized him on the robbery.

Q. Who?

A. The man in the plaid jacket.

Q. You're indicating the defendant?

A. Uh, huh.

Q. O.K.

A. And I went in there and I looked, you know, and the man told me he said circle the one that you think it is and if you're not sure put a question mark. I asked him again, and I couldn't talk to nobody else. So I had to—I wanted to make sure that I heard him right, and so I went in there and I circled it. And then Detective Newkirk—

Q: Let me just stop you there fore (*sic*) one second. When you walked in and you looked at the lineup were you sure right then.

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled.

A. When I walked in I knew who it was and I was sure but I was scared to, you know—I didn't—

Q. Go ahead. Then you said you walked out.

A. I walked out and I went into this little room and they have where you sign this paper that he showed me and I put a circle and put a question mark by it and Detective Newkirk came out and I said Newkirk, you know—

Mr. Tolliver: Objection to this conversation.

A. I knew—

The Court: Not what someone told you, Miss Clark. she added that Walker "positively looks like him."

A. I told Detective Newkirk that I knew—that I recognized him when I walked in there and I got scared and I circled number one with a question mark.

[35] Q. When you said that did you say a particular number to Detective Newkirk?

A. Number five.

Q. Did you say I knew it was number five?

A. I said I recognize—

Mr. Tolliver: Objection.

The Court: Overruled. You may answer.

A. I said I recognized number five and I circled number one and put the question mark by it. Because I just got—I just got stiff. I don't know. Something just came over me. I got scared when I went in there.

The Magistrate dismisses Ms. Clark's explanation because

> [i]t is inconceivable that an experienced police officer who had dedicated three years to solving the murder of a fellow officer would permit the only eyewitness who could identify his prime suspect to walk away from the lineup with a threat to "kick your butt all the way back to Detroit" [testified to by a public defender who attended the line-up on behalf of Walker] ringing in her ears, rather than making some effort to have her correct the identification.

(Mag. 103-04.) The question is simply not whether the Magistrate or this court believes the testimony. Such speculation about Rene Clark's testimony is plainly at odds with the requirement that the evidence be viewed in the light most favorable to the prosecution, resolving all conflicts in its favor and deferring to that resolution.

Other corroborating witnesses testified for the prosecution. Mr. Mack's wife, Mabel Mack, although unable to positively identify Walker as her husband's killer, testified that Walker "looks very much like the man" who shot her husband. On cross-examination she added that Walker "positively looks like him." **[36]** She was then asked, "Are you saying that the features [of Walker] are similar to the person you saw?" She answered, "Yes."

Mrs. Willie Mae Hart, who resided near the A&P store, testified that shortly after the shooting she saw a brown compact automobile leave the scene of the crime, driven by a black male with a bad complexion similar to Walker's. Although she could not positively identify Walker, she testified that they both had the same characteristic, a bad complexion. Her testimony also supported Ogeltree's and Davidson's statement that Walker escaped from the A&P store parking lot alone, driving the brown Maverick, while the three other participants left in the white Plymouth driven by Davidson.

The testimony of the state's principal fact witnesses has now been reviewed. Rather than dismiss the probative value of the testimony of these witnesses as the Magistrate did, the court must credit each of these witnesses insofar as the testimony bears on the ultimate issue to be decided by this court: whether *any* rational trier of fact could find Walker guilty beyond a reasonable

doubt (as emphasized in *Jackson, supra,* at 319). What the Magistrate has done, *Jackson* says he should not do:

> But this inquiry does not require a court "to ask itself whether *it* believes that the evidence at the trial established guilt beyond a reasonable doubt."

443 U.S. at 319.

[37] C.

Walker's Alibi

The prosecution, well aware of Walker's alibi defense, acknowledged from the outset that Cuyahoga County jail records, on their face, recorded Walker as having been incarcerated between April 14 and August 1, 1972. Like any other alibi, however, Walker's alibi was subject to attack.

Prisoners upon entering the jail were recorded in the jail register at the booking desk which kept the jail's total inmate population. Cards with each inmate's photograph and personal data were filled out. One card remained at the booking desk while the other was kept on the floor where the prisoner was assigned.

Ricardo Brown, the acting Cuyahoga County jail warden between April and August 1972, testified in the prosecution's case-in-chief. He stated that deputies on each floor were responsible for "keeping count of the prisoners." On each floor, the deputies kept "daily report sheets" consisting of tallies of card counts and physical or "head" counts of the prisoners. He testified that the prisoners on each floor were "theoretically" to be counted on each of three daily shifts. But "as a matter of practice," a physical or "head" count of prisoners was conducted only on the third shift (11 p.m. to 7 a.m.). The other shifts simply did not physically count the prisoners.

Ricardo Brown also testified regarding specific discrepancies in the daily report sheets for several floors on various [38] days, including July 21 and 22, 1972. For instance, the daily report sheet for the fifth floor (Walker's), second shift (3 p.m.-11 p.m.), on July 21, 1972, showed a "head" count of 175 and a card count of 162. The daily report sheet for the same floor, first shift (7 a.m. to 3 p.m.) on July 22, 1972 (the day of the murder), showed a "head" count of 174 and a card count of 175.[14] Comparisons for the other floors showed similar discrepancies.

Several sheriff's deputies assigned to jail duties also testified about prisoner counts. One of these, Security Sergeant Urankar, agreed that "every night . . . the body count from the floor had to match the body count down at the booking desk." He further answered "no, sir" to the question, "From what you were shown by the prosecutor, was there any discrepancy in any of the records that were shown to you by the prosecutor as to the body count?"

The Magistrate thus summed up the jail prisoner count testimony:

> While the prosecution was able to demonstrate some discrepancies in the testimony of the sheriff's deputies who appeared as defense witnesses regarding the particulars as to how certain procedures were carried out at the Cuyahoga County Jail, there was no evidence that at anytime during the critical time period the total head count of prisoners on the several floors differed from the count of the jail population as maintained at the booking desk.

(Mag. 102.)

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14. Brown also testified that "more often than not" when the head count did not match the card count, the deputies simply changed one or the other so that they would match. (Tr. 89.)

[39] Since none of the prisoner counts were stipulated, it was for the jury to decide from the jail records in evidence as well as the oral testimony of jail security personnel what weight, if any, should be given to the various counts. Thus the jail records did not provide "conclusive" proof that Walker was in jail on July 22 as Walker argues in the margin.[15] It is correct, as the Magistrate concludes, that "there was no evidence that . . . the total head count of prisoners on the second floor differed from the count of the jail population as maintained at the booking desk." But jail officials also testified that the "head" and card counts on each floor were supposed to match. (*See* Tr. 369-70, 401-02, 638, 700-01, 723-24.) The fact that "more often than not" those counts failed to match certainly bears on the general reliability of the jail records and the efficiency of jail personnel.[16]

Other testimony questions the accuracy and reliability of the jail records. Thomas Baker, the assistant chief [40] of records at the jail, testified that jail records indicated that Walker left the jail for court appearances on April 14, 20, and 26, May 18 and 19, June 12 and 13, and August 1, 1972. Yet the appearance docket of the Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts showed that Walker

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15. "[T]he record is conclusive that Walker was in the Cuyahoga County jail on the day Guy Mack was killed, July 22, 1972. . . The jail records revealed that the third shift body count corresponded with the booking desk records indicating that the full complement of prisoners was present (T. 78-80, 369, 370, 691, 703, 704, 731, 781, 782, 892). [The balance of this argument falls because it depends on the assumption just argued that the jail records are "conclusive." As seen, this assumption is not established.] To get into the jail, one must pass the booking desk, two locked gates and a locked door, each of which must be manually unlocked and take one of two manually operated elevators to the upper floors of the jail. (T. 696-699). To get out the reverse procedure must be followed."

16. Indeed, several of the daily report sheets showed that during various shifts, no card counts were even taken; or, if taken, were not recorded. (See Tr. 668.)

appeared in court only on April 14 and 26 and August 1, 1972. They do not show appearances on April 20, May 18 and 19, and June 12 and 13, 1972. (*See* Tr. 883-85.) Reasons were presented to the trier of fact for disbelieving the accuracy and reliability of the jail records. Thus the records cannot be regarded as "conclusive" proof.

Indeed, the Magistrate ignores the jury's right to accept all, or part or none of the jail records testimony. Moreover, the jury was entitled to draw whatever inferences, within its discretion, the evidence warranted. Thus, for example, the jury might have given significance to the fact that the head count was taken only once and then on the third shift (11 p.m.-7 a.m.). Hence, even the comparison of the total head count (of all floors) with the booking desk count (jail slate or alternatively, the jail register) at best gave only a once a day count of the total jail population. Thus it offered no proof as to the presence or absence of a prisoner from the jail during the balance of each 24-hour day.

Although seven Cuyahoga County jail officials testified about the records and record keeping procedures, no jail official testified on personal knowledge that **[41]** Walker was incarcerated between April and August 1972 or, more particularly, on July 21 and July 22, 1972. Three inmates of the jail testified that Walker was incarcerated and to their knowledge did not escape at any time. Nevertheless it was for the jury, hearing those witnesses, to determine their credibility and to doubt the reliability of their testimony if it so chose.

Other witnesses testified on Walker's behalf for the purpose of impeaching the credibility of Davidson, Ogeltree and Rene Clark. Here, too, credibility was a matter for the jury to determine first hand, and under *Jackson*, giving weight to their testimony is not within the authority of this court (or the Magistrate).

The conflicting evidence undoubtedly presented the jury a difficult question of fact. Yet, alibi defenses invariably present such conflicts. For instance, in *Harris v. Clusen*, 487 F.Supp. 616 (E.D. Wisc. 1980), the habeas corpus petitioner had been convicted in state court of armed robbery. The prosecution presented four witnesses to the robbery in Milwaukee, Wisconsin who identified the petitioner as the robber. The petitioner presented the alibi testimony of several family members that he had been at a family gathering in Chicago, Illinois on the day of the robbery. Petitioner challenged the sufficiency of the evidence under *Jackson*. Denying relief, the court stated:

> Viewing the evidence in this case in the light most favorable to the prosecution, four persons identified the petitioner as the person who committed **[42]** the armed robbery, and one testified that she saw a gun in petitioner's possession during the commission of the robbery. Given the directly contrary testimony of petitioner's witnesses that he was in Chicago at the time, the jury as the trier of facts was required to choose between believing the prosecution's or the petitioner's witnesses, and it was entitled to make that choice in the manner which it did.

Id., at 617-18. Although Walker's alibi evidence is unique and differs from the nature of the alibi evidence presented in *Harris*, the point remains that under *Jackson* conflicts in the evidence are to be resolved by the federal habeas corpus court in favor of the prosecution. The trier of fact in this case, as in *Harris*, was "entitled to make that choice in the manner which it did." On the competent and relevant evidence of record, this court cannot say the jury acted irrationally.

III.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated in Part I of this memorandum, Walker's third ground for relief is granted. For the reasons stated in Part II of this memorandum, the first and second grounds for relief are denied. Unless the state chooses to retry Walker within 120 days from the filing of the memorandum and order of this court, Raymond Walker shall be released.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ WILLIAM K. THOMAS
U.S. District Judge

SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM AND ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

(Filed February 2, 1981)

C79-2132

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION

RAYMOND WALKER,
Petitioner,

vs.

ARNOLD R. JAGO, SUPT.,
Respondent.

SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM AND ORDER
THOMAS, *J.*

I.

On January 28, 1981, this court issued a memorandum and order granting the third ground for relief in Raymond Walker's petition for a writ of habeas corpus. At p.19 of the memorandum, this court stated, "The prosecutor's questioning of [Willie] Hightower permitted the jury to infer that one of defendant's witnesses may have offered a job to [John] Appling to persuade him not to testify." As clearly indicated by the quotations of testimony preceding the above statement in the memorandum, this court's reference at p.19 should have been to the prosecutor's questioning of "Stretch" Myers, another defense witness, and not to Willie Hightower.

II.

One week before this court issued its memorandum and order, the Supreme Court decided the case of [2] *Sumners v. Mata*, 49 U.S.L.W. 4133 (1981), which dealt with the presumption of correctness under 28 U.S.C. §2254(d) to be applied in federal habeas corpus proceedings where a state court has made "a determination after a hearing on the merits of a factual issue. . . ." *Sua sponte* this court shall consider the effect of section 2254(d),[1] as elucidated in *Sumner*, on the ruling in Part I of the January 28 memorandum and order.

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1. Subsections (1)-(7) of section 2254(d) have no application in this case. Section 2254(d)(8) provides:

> (d) In any proceeding instituted in a Federal court by an application for a writ of habeas corpus by a person in custody pursuant to the judgment of a State court, a determination after a hearing on the merits of a factual issue, made by a State court of competent jurisdiction in a proceeding to which the applicant for the writ and the State or an officer or agent thereof were parties, evidenced by a written finding, written opinion, or other reliable and adequate written indicia, shall be presumed to be correct, unless the applicant shall establish or it shall otherwise appear, or the respondent shall admit—
>
> • • • • •
>
> (8) or unless that part of the record of the State court proceeding in which the determination of such factual issue was made, pertinent to a determination of the sufficiency of the evidence to support such factual determination, is produced as provided for hereinafter, and the Federal court on a consideration of such part of the record as a whole concludes that such factual determination is not fairly supported by the record: And in an evidentiary hearing in the proceeding in the Federal court, when due proof of such factual determination has been made, unless the existence of one or more of the circumstances respectively set forth in paragraphs numbered (1) to (7), inclusive, is shown by the applicant, otherwise appears, or is admitted by the respondent or unless the court concludes pursuant to the provisions of paragraph numbered (8) that the record in the State court proceeding, considered as a whole, does not fairly support such factual determination, the burden shall rest upon the applicant to establish by convincing evidence that the factual determination by the State court was erroneous.

[3] In *Sumner*, on the basis of 28 U.S.C. §2254(d), the Supreme Court vacated and remanded a Ninth Circuit decision granting a writ of habeas corpus. The court of appeals had held that a pretrial photographic identification procedure used by state police was impermissibly suggestive and gave rise to a substantial likelihood of misidentification of the petitioner in violation of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Ninth Circuit's findings were "in conflict with the conclusion reached by every other state and federal judge after reviewing the exact same record."[2] 49 U.S.L.W. at 4136.

Writing for the Court's majority, Justice Rehnquist observed:

> [I]t is apparent that the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit did not apply the "presumption of correctness" which is mandated by [28 U.S.C. §2254(d)] to the factual determinations made by the California state courts. Indeed, the court did not even refer in its opinion to §2254(d).
>
> • • • • •

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2. The habeas corpus petitioner in *Sumner* had been convicted of first degree murder of a fellow inmate at a state correctional facility. On appeal, the California court of appeals held that the photographic identification procedure was fair, finding that "there [was] no showing of influence by the investigating officers; that the [state identification] witness had an adequate opportunity to view the crime; and that their descriptions [were] accurate." *Sumner*, 49 U.S.L.W. at 4134 (quoting the California decision). A state habeas corpus action by petitioner was unsuccessful.

A federal district court denied the petitioner a writ of habeas corpus. The Ninth Circuit reversed and granted the writ. It found (1) that the circumstances surrounding the witnesses' observation of the crime gave rise to a likelihood of misidentification; (2) the witnesses had not given sufficiently detailed descriptions of the assailant; and (3) considerable pressure from prison officials and prison factions had been exerted upon the witnesses. 611 F.2d at 758-759.

> **[4]** When Congress provided in §2254(d) that a habeas corpus court could *not* dispense with the "presumption of correctness" embodied therein unless it concluded that the factual determinations were not supported by the record, it contemplated at least some reasoned written references to section 2254(d) and the state court findings.

Id.

The Court recognized that federal habeas corpus proceedings have created a source of friction between the state and federal judicial systems. The Court concluded that "Congress obviously meant to alleviate some of that friction when it enacted subsection (d)" to section 2254 in 1966. "This interest in federalism requires deference by federal courts [under section 2254(d)] to factual determinations of all state courts." *Id.* at 4135. Accordingly, the Court held that

> a habeas court should include in its opinion granting the writ the reasoning which led it to conclude that any of the first seven factors [of section 2254(d)] were present, or the reasoning which led it to conclude [under subsection (8)] that the state finding was "not fairly supported by the record."

Id. at 4137.

This court is aware that the Ohio Supreme Court, on Walker's direct appeal, considered what it termed "contested testimony" and rejected Walker's allegations of error. Without detailing the substance of the "contested testimony,"[3] the Ohio Supreme Court adopted the Ohio **[5]** court of appeal's reasoning that Walker

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3. Petitioner's brief before the Ohio Supreme Court discussed each of the evidentiary errors upon which this court relied in Part I. The only specific discussion of the "contested testi-

(Continued on following page)

> having offered the records as proof of the truth therein stated, as well as proof of the facts reasonably to be inferred therefrom . . . placed in issue the credibility generally of the records, the recordmaking process and the record keepers.

55 Ohio St. 2d at 214. The Court stated:

> Upon a review of the contested testimony, we find that it was relevant, in that it tended to disprove the accuracy of the jail records, which was a question in dispute in the instant cause. The contested evidence went to the credibility of the various jail records by demonstrating the overall inefficiency of the persons and the system in which they were maintained and the general lack of inmate supervision.

Id. In addition, the Court found that the admission of the "contested testimony" was "neither an abuse of discretion nor a resultant prejudicial harm to [Walker]." *Id.*

In Part I, subsections A-F of this court's memorandum and order, six separate evidentiary "episodes" at petitioner's trial were reviewed and analyzed. In each subsection it was concluded, contrary to the Ohio Supreme Court, that the factual information, permitted by the trial court to be presented to the jury, was either completely irrelevant to the issues raised by Walker's alibi defense or grossly prejudicial to a fair consideration of that defense by the jury (or both). It was concluded that the eviden-

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Footnote continued—

mony" by the Ohio Supreme Court concerned evidence of gambling at the Cuyahoga County Jail. 55 Ohio St.2d at 214, n.2. The relevance (or lack thereof) of that testimony was not one of the six main evidentiary errors in subsections A-F of Part I upon which this court relied in finding a constitutional violation.

tiary errors when considered together amounted to a due process violation.

This court's determination in Part I is "considerably at odds" with the conclusion of the Ohio Supreme [6] Court. *See Sumner, supra,* at 4134. The conflicting determinations, however, are not, strictly speaking, findings of fact within the meaning of section 2254(d). They are legal conclusions about the relevancy and prejudice of evidence presented at Walker's trial. At most they are mixed questions of law and fact. Nevertheless, to the extent that the Ohio Supreme Court's decision may implicitly embody any findings of fact, this court concludes, for the reasons set forth in Part I, subsections A-F of the memorandum and order, that such findings of fact are not "fairly supported by the record" and are therefore not entitled to the "presumption of correctness" set forth in section 2254(d).

III.

Petitioner moves this court, pursuant to Fed.R.App.P. 23(c) to order his release from custody upon a personal recognizance bond or other appropriate bond, pending the respondent's appeal from this court's decision. Respondent opposes petitioner's motion but requests that, if granted, bond be set at an amount and with sufficient sureties to secure his appearance for retrial. In addition, respondent requests this court to stay its order requiring a retrial within 120 days from January 28, 1981. A hearing on petitioner's motion [7] to set bond and respondent's request for a stay is hereby scheduled for April 3, 1981 at 3:00 p.m. An appropriate order shall be issued to secure petitioner's presence at the hearing.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ WILLIAM K. THOMAS
U.S. District Judge

ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT DENYING MOTION FOR REHEARING

(Filed June 24, 1983)

Nos. 81-3117, 81-3260

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

RAYMOND WALKER,
Petitioner-Appellee,

v.

TED ENGLE,
Respondent-Appellant.

ORDER

BEFORE: KEITH and JONES, *Circuit Judges,* and BROWN, *Senior Circuit Judge.*

The appellant has filed a motion for a rehearing and suggestion for rehearing en banc in the above-styled case. A majority of the active Judges of this Court have not favored a rehearing en banc and the motion was, thus, referred to the original panel. Upon consideration of the appellant's request, the panel has noted nothing of substance which was not carefully considered before issuance of the Court's order. Accordingly, the motion for rehearing is hereby DENIED.

ENTERED BY ORDER OF THE COURT

/s/ JOHN P. HEHMAN
Clerk

Office-Supreme Court, U.S.
FILED
SEP 16 1983
ALEXANDER L. STEVAS,
CLERK

No. 83-151

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1983

STATE OF OHIO,
Petitioner,

vs.

RAYMOND WALKER,
Respondent.

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

BRIEF FOR THE RESPONDENT IN OPPOSITION

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No. 83-151

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1983

STATE OF OHIO,
Petitioner,

vs.

RAYMOND WALKER,
Respondent.

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

BRIEF FOR THE RESPONDENT IN OPPOSITION

The Respondent, Raymond Walker, respectfully requests that this Court deny the Petition for Writ of Certiorari seeking review of the Sixth Circuit's opinion in this case. That opinion is reported at 703 F.2d 959.

REASONS WHY THE WRIT SHOULD BE DENIED

The United States courts below concluded that Respondent was denied due process of law in violation of the Constitution of the United States by the admission of irrelevant and prejudicial evidence in the criminal trial in the Ohio court. Petitioner's contention that they determined Ohio law is simply not supported by the opinions.

Respondent, Raymond Walker, was tried and convicted in September, 1976 of a murder which occurred on

July 22, 1972. Walker's defense was that from April 14, 1972 until August 1, 1972 he was incarcerated in the Cuyahoga County Jail. The prosecution conceded that the records of the Sheriff of Cuyahoga County and of the Court of Commons Pleas of Cuyahoga County reflected incarceration. To gain the day, however, the prosecution fired every salvo available to it, including bringing out evidence of the conviction of Major Edward Payne, who became warden of the Cuyahoga County Jail a year after Walker was released, for theft of property from the Jail; investigation in 1976 by the Ohio State Auditor of the commissary records of the Sheriff; the fact that the Sheriff was resisting the investigation; gambling, use of drugs and a hunger strike in the Jail; investigation of Jail conditions by community groups; alleged impediment of extradition proceedings against Walker by Cuyahoga County; alleged threats to certain prosecution witnesses by unidentified individuals; and alleged note taking by a deputy sheriff during the trial with the implication that he was feeding information to the witnesses called by the defense from the Sheriff's office. Much of the prosecution's evidence was buttressed by the waiving of newspaper articles pertaining to those matters.

The trial court was of some assistance, commenting that the evidence pertaining to Major Payne was "very relevant"; bracing an imperfect identification of the defendant with the comment that "the record will show that the defendant looks very similar like the man that she saw shoot her husband"; reprimanding a deputy clerk of courts from Cuyahoga County who manifested his resentment toward an abusive cross examination with the reminder that he was not in Cuyahoga County; calling prosecution witnesses by their first names; accusing defense counsel of failing to return a transcript of the trial of one of the

alleged accomplices, a prosecution witness; and, on his own initiative, inducing John Appling, who had unequivocally stated he knew nothing and was not going to testify, to state his name and the fact that he was confined in the Ohio Penitentiary, and then permitting questions of other witnesses concerning the fact that Appling had been in the Cuyahoga County Jail at the time that Walker was in Jail.

The Ohio Supreme Court in review, *State v. Walker* (1978), 55 Ohio St. 2d 208, held that everything goes, commenting at page 214:

> We find the Court of Appeals' resolution of this proposition below to be well reasoned. Specifically, appellant presented various records of the Cuyahoga County jail which showed that he should have been in the jail at the time decedent was killed. The Court of Appeals found that having offered the records as proof of the truth therein stated, as well as proof of the facts reasonably to be inferred therefrom, appellant placed in issue the credibility generally of the records, the record-making process and the record keepers.
>
> Upon a review of the contested testimony, we find that it was relevant, in that it tended to disprove the accuracy of the jail records, which was a question in dispute in the instant cause. The contested evidence went to the credibility of the various jail records by demonstrating the overall inefficiency of the persons and the system in which they were maintained and the general lack of inmate supervision.

Contrary to Petitioner's contention, the Sixth Circuit and the District Court did not base their opinions upon Ohio law on the admissibility of evidence, but rather upon

the constitutional guarantee to due process. The Sixth Circuit, in *Walker v. Engle*, 703 F.2d 959 (6th Cir. 1983) at page 968 held (page A18 of the Petition):

> It is clear that the cumulative effect of the conduct of the state was to arouse prejudice against the defendant to such an extent that he was denied fundamental fairness. The trial was inflamed by marginally relevant and irrelevant evidence that was highly prejudicial. The contrary contentions of the state are supported by neither controlling authority nor considerations of fairness and justice. By allowing the trial to focus more on the claimed corruption of the Sheriff's Department than on the issue of Walker's guilt or innocence, the trial court denied Walker due process of law in violation of the Constitution.

And the District Court, at page A24 of the Petition, commented:

> The Trial court permitted the introduction of testimony so irrelevant, prejudicial and inflammatory that it "undermined the integrity of the fact finding process and a fair determination of the principal fact in issue," that is, Walker's alibi defense. (See Habeas Corpus Petition, p. 2). The trial errors "offend a sense of justice," *Rochin v. California*, 342 U.S. 165, 173 (1952), and cannot be considered harmless beyond a reasonable doubt. See *Champion v. California*, 386 U.S. 18 (1967).

The relevancy of evidence is a question of law and therefore a state court determination is not entitled to the presumptions set forth in 28 U.S.C. §2254(D), *Cuyler v. Sullivan*, 446 U.S. 335 (1980). Similarly, the violation of Walker's constitutional rights is, of course, a matter of federal law and a state court determination is not entitled

to any presumption, *Brewer v. Williams*, 430 U.S. 385 (1977).

Petitioner strains to make a fact out of the state court of appeals' finding that Walker's counsel failed to object to Appling's taking the stand. In the first place, as pointed out by the Sixth Circuit at 703 F.2d 965, page A11 of the Petition, Walker's counsel made it clear that he opposed Appling's testimony. Furthermore, as pointed out by Judge Brown in his concurring statement at 703 F.2d 970, page A21 of Petition, the damage occurred through the questioning of other witnesses concerning Appling over numerous objections.

The prosecution's tendency to use every tool to its advantage, ignoring the other consequences, is manifested by the Petition. In its statement of the case, it points out that Walker, in his first trial, four years after the incident, procured a friend to testify that on the day of the murder they were drinking together. This is offered obviously to impute the veracity of Walker. On the other hand, admitting that Walker had been in the Cuyahoga County Jail, without embarrassment it has pictured him as a super criminal capable of slipping out of the Jail, committing a murder and sneaking back into the Jail undetected, but after performing this remarkable feat, upon apprehension completely forgetting his perfect alibi.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the Petition for a Writ of Certiorari should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

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